

**Assessing the Decolonization of Cultural Heritage Policy in Belize through the
Analysis of Narratives Presented at Colonial Sites**

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Abstract

In 1981, after three centuries of colonial dominance, the country of Belize officially became a sovereign nation. Almost 40 years later the country is still working to overcome the lingering effects of colonialism. This is evident in Belize's focus on creating a new national identity for the country. They seek to achieve this through the development of their cultural heritage, as expressed in their 2016 National Cultural Policy. When cultural policy is decolonized, free of the influence of the colonizer, the values of Belizeans will drive the creation of a national identity. Decolonization occurs politically, when an official act separates the colonized from the colonizer. It also occurs intellectually, through a process where a peoples' thoughts, ideas and values are detangled from those of the colonizer and are free from the colonizer's influence.

This thesis will assess the extent to which Belize has intellectually decolonized its cultural heritage policy. This task will be accomplished by tracing Belize's history from the colonial era to the present day to grasp the full range of its heritage answering what are the dominant historical narratives? What must be decentered for heritage to be fully inclusive? Then, an analysis of Belize's cultural heritage policies is driven by the following metrics: heritage typologies, definitions, key actors, publics acknowledged, uses of heritage and institutional capacity building. These metrics expose how over time the policies increase their capacity to support a more inclusive heritage capable of decentering the dominant historical narrative representative of an intellectually decolonizing policy.

Finally, policy is not stagnant and requires action to carry out and achieve its goals. Understanding how these intellectually decolonizing policies play out in the real world is a crucial way to judge the true extent of their power. One way to achieve this is by interpreting the

narratives represented at two colonial heritage sites. Interpretation involves a narrative analysis where the plain words and images of the narratives are broken down to understand the narrative's purposes and effects and the extent to which it reflects an intellectually decolonized cultural heritage policy. These individual site narratives contribute to the larger heritage story in Belize and thus provide a basis for understanding how heritage, policy and intellectual decolonization play out in the wider Belizean heritage realm, the preservation field at large, and how far Belize has come in reclaiming its identity.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In 1981, after three centuries of colonial dominance, the country of Belize officially became a sovereign nation. Almost 40 years later Belizeans are still working to overcome the lingering effects of this colonial rule. Colonialism does not stop the moment independence is achieved. Rather, the political split between countries merely acts as a catalyst speeding up the process that started with the fight for independence – the process of intellectual decolonization. Intellectual decolonization ultimately allows for all aspects of the colonized life to be detangled from the values of the former suppressor and gives a newly sovereign country the ability to decenter the narratives, so heavily influenced by colonial rule, that have dictated their individual and national identity for so long. This national identity is formed in many ways, and cultural heritage is a key means of producing it. This thesis seeks to assess the intellectual decolonization of Belize's cultural policy through an analysis of its policy and how such policy is reflected in the narratives presented at two colonial heritage sites. When intellectually decolonized, a fully representative heritage will drive the creation of a national identity that does not seek to assimilate a people, like when under colonial rule, but rather celebrates all as equally important contributors to the national story.

Cultural Heritage plays a significant role in developing a national identity.¹ The state has the power and the resources to encourage, promote and preserve a narrative best suited to its interests.² In the case of Belize, there is no question that implementing a national heritage policy is inspired by the goal of generating a national identity – one element of the greater nation building process. This is evident in the first policy objective in Belize's cultural policy, released

¹ Karina V. Korostelina, "Understanding Values of Cultural Heritage within the Framework of Social Identity Conflicts," in *Values in Heritage Management: Emerging Approaches and Research Directions*, ed. Erica Avrami, Susan Macdonald, Tandall Mason, David Myers (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 2017).

² Karina V. Korostelina, *Values in Heritage Management: Emerging Approaches and Research Directions*.

in 2016, which states “to nurture and forge the development of a Belizean national identity.”³

When policy is decolonized the values of the Belizeans and not the colonizers will drive the development of a national identity. Understanding the stories told at colonial sites in Belize will allow for an evaluation as to whether the cultural policy in the country is in the process of decolonizing, thus encouraging a national identity driven by Belizean values and an independent intellectual thought and not the ideals of the colonizer.

The need for intellectual decolonization is evident in the attention given to the topic in the country. The subject was a topic of choice during the annual National Lecture given as part of the Belize September Independence Celebrations in 2020. Ultimately, the lecture exposes that ongoing concerns over the decolonization of Belize are relevant because the country is still working to remove itself not just politically but also intellectually from its colonial past.⁴ Understanding the extent to which Belize has decolonized its processes and policies in regards to its colonial heritage through a study of the narratives presented at colonial heritage sites will allow for an assessment of how far Belize has come in its pursuit of intellectual decolonization. This will ultimately dictate whose heritage is determined to be valuable enough to promote as a national heritage.

I will assess the extent of the intellectual decolonization of cultural policy in Belize through three veins of research. First, by looking at the history of Belize from the colonial era to

³ "Belize National Cultural Policy 2016-2026," *National Institute of Culture and History*," accessed on October 20, 2020. <https://www.dgft.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Copy-of-National-Cultural-Policy-Final-Policy-Document-1.pdf>; Note that it was produced with the assistance of UNESCO.

⁴ The Belize September Lecture, sponsored by the government's National Institute for Culture and History, highlighted this concern in its 2020 lecture: *Belizeanizing History: Decolonizing an Independent Belize*. This lecture featured four Belizeans speakers. Ifáşínà Efunyemi focused on the relevance of decolonization today. Jordan Craig described how internationalization was a factor in Belize achieving independence. Delmer Tzib focused on the need to decolonize the education system in Belize and Filiberto Penados focused on issues relating to decolonization and indigenous peoples. For more see “Belizeanizing history: Decolonizing an independent Belize (Belize September Lecture),” National Institute for Culture and History, streamed live on September 16, 2020, YouTube video, 2:23:29 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2ei3ED-SuM>.

the present to understand what the dominant and non-dominant historical narratives are to grasp the full range of its heritage and what an inclusive heritage should look like. Next, by analyzing the evolution of Belize's cultural heritage laws through a series of metrics allowing for an evaluation of their trends and an assessment of their ability to support an inclusive heritage. Finally, by interpreting public-facing narratives at colonial cultural heritage sites through two site-based case studies: St. John's Cathedral and the former Government House to see if an inclusive heritage is being portrayed and shared with the public. These three veins build upon one another and allow for an assessment of the intellectual decolonization of cultural policy in Belize.

The results of this research were mixed. In isolation, the results of the policy analysis displayed trends towards intellectual decolonization, where ideas and values are detangled from those of the colonizer and are free from the colonizer's influence. However, the results of the narrative analysis overall revealed a reverence for the colonial history of the site over the non-dominant narrative of the enslaved or minority voices. What this research does reveal is that narratives can be used as one factor in determining the progress of the intellectual decolonization of cultural policy, which has the power to encourage a narrative that is decentered and focused on the formerly colonized, ultimately contributing to the development of a national identity representative of all.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will dive into the research questions that drove the development of this thesis including defining decolonization and the use of the tropes of "colonizer" and "colonized" or "Belizean." Finally, I will explain the research methodology used.

I. Research Questions

A series of research questions drove the trajectory for this thesis with the ultimate goal in understanding how tools like policy function to promote a more representative cultural heritage.

1. How is decolonization defined? Politically? Intellectually? As a process?

To draw conclusions about the extent of decolonization it is crucial to understand what decolonization actually is. This thesis touches on merely one segment of the greater body of research existing on decolonization, within the even larger body of post-colonial theory. My research on the subject resulted in the definition of decolonization used for the purposes of this study. The concept of decolonization can be broken down into two parts. First, there is the political decolonization of a country. This is the official, political act that separates the colonized nation from the nation of the colonizer.⁵ Thus, decolonization in this respect can be achieved through an act between two nations on a specific date at a certain time to be celebrated as the day of independence forevermore.⁶ However, the decolonization process extends beyond a newly found state sovereignty. Decolonization also happens at the intellectual level when thoughts, ideas and values are detangled from those of the colonizer. This takes longer to achieve because to *intellectually decolonize* there must be a decolonization of the mind.⁷ As Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o explains, colonialism's "most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonized, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world."⁸

Liberating the mind from the idea that the culture of the colonizer is superior to the culture of the colonized is when true intellectual decolonization is achieved in relation to this

⁵ Raymond F. Betts, "Decolonization a brief history of the word," in *Beyond Empire and Nation*, ed. Els Bogaerts and Remco Raben (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2012), 23.

⁶ Jan C. Jansen and Jurgan Osterhammel, *Decolonization: A Short History*, trans. Jeremiah Riemer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017) 14.

⁷ Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1986) 16.

⁸ Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1986) 16.

study. The history of the colonizer is no longer seen as “true, right and better” and the culture of the colonized no longer seen as “false, wrong and inferior.”⁹ There are no hard rules or specific steps to take to decolonize the mind. It happens in fits and starts as people work to regain belief in the worth of their ideas, values and culture. The decolonization of cultural heritage policies and practices is just one element contributing to the greater decolonization of intellectual thought. There is no set way to measure if a policy or practice is “decolonized.” It is an ongoing process set within a continuum with “decolonized” on one end and “colonized” on the other. Working towards decolonized by achieving the characteristics of the decolonized definition is the best way to understand the trajectory of a country working towards an intellectual decolonization.

In Belize, a country that has been politically decolonized since 1981, there is still work being done to achieve the decolonization of intellectual thought, or in their own words, “be ideologically independent – free of the impositions of the colonizer.”¹⁰ Achieving ideological independence in regards to cultural heritage is important in this journey to independence because the Belizeans are able to reclaim their heritage as their own and tell their story from their own point of view. Evaluating the narratives at historic sites is one way to understand where the intellectual decolonization of cultural heritage currently stands and by extension how the cultural heritage policies work to encourage or discourage intellectual decolonization.

2. What is the extent of the scholarship available on cultural heritage policy development in Belize? On its decolonization?

⁹ “Belizeanizing history: Decolonizing an independent Belize (Belize September Lecture),” Belize History Association, streamed live on September 16, 2020. YouTube video, 2:23:29
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2ei3ED-SuM>.

¹⁰ “Belizeanizing history: Decolonizing an independent Belize (Belize September Lecture),” Belize History Association, streamed live on September 16, 2020. YouTube video, 2:23:29
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2ei3ED-SuM>.

To make greater sense of how this topic has been studied in the scholarly literature a search was conducted to locate articles discussing the decolonization of cultural heritage policy in Belize and the development of cultural heritage policy after independence. This study revealed that there is a significant gap in the scholarship available on cultural heritage policy and its development and nothing was revealed in regards to an assessment of the decolonization of cultural policy.¹¹ The study did reveal that there is an emphasis on archaeological issues, especially in relation to the Maya heritage prevalent in Belize, but there is a deficit in scholarly materials available on analyzing the effects of heritage policy beyond the archeological realm. This in itself is evidence of the colonial value in archaeology. This thesis seeks to enlarge the scholarship available on the decolonization of cultural heritage policy in Belize as well as the scholarship available on sites that are not associated with archaeology. Colonial heritage receives attention in the 2016 Belize National Cultural Policy.¹² Other heritage types, such as urban heritage, , arguably a form of colonial heritage, receive minimal attention and are in great danger of being lost.¹³ A survey of cultural heritage policy will begin to fill in the gaps in the literature. Choosing colonial sites as case studies will also begin to broaden the scholarship available on heritage sites in Belize.

3. What are the dominant historical narratives in Belize? What should an inclusive heritage look like? What needs to be decentered?

This third question resulted in the second chapter of this thesis. Assessing the intellectual decolonization of cultural heritage policy requires understanding the full story of Belize's history

¹¹ See Literature Review in Appendix A for further discussion on this issue.

¹² "Belize National Cultural Policy 2016-2026." *National Institute of Culture and History*. Accessed on 10/20/20. <https://www.dgft.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Copy-of-National-Cultural-Policy-Final-Policy-Document-1.pdf>; Produced with the assistance of UNESCO.

¹³ For more information on the endangerment of urban heritage see <https://www.belizeplanners.org/belize-city-in-young-hands-project/>.

to articulate what will be gained from a policy that promotes an inclusive heritage working to decenter its focus from the colonial values that have dominated it for so long. By reading secondary historical compilations by scholars of Belize and by reading compilations by Belizeans themselves I obtained an understanding of the country's general history. The global pandemic prevented actual archival research in Belize but the online documentation available provided the opportunity to read the Archives of British Honduras, review historical maps as well as newspaper articles. Dominant historical narratives were identified through this research and the opportunity to postulate on what an inclusive history, supported by an intellectually decolonized cultural heritage policy, could look like.

Further, understanding that the colonial history from the British perspective as a dominant narrative further set the course for selecting two colonial sites as case studies. The first, St. John's Cathedral built in 1812 and the second the former Government House built in 1814. If a truly decolonized narrative is represented then both sides of the story – the story of the colonizer and the colonized – should be equally told.

4. What are the cultural heritage policies of Belize? What international conventions are they signatories to? What cultural policies are enforceable by the state? What metrics will be used as evidence to determine the decolonization of cultural policy over time?

This question resulted in the third chapter of this thesis. I was unable to find a general survey of the cultural heritage policies of Belize and thus dug into their legislation to compile one myself. Starting with policies generated after self-governance of Belize began in 1964, twelve relevant laws, treaties and policies were found. During this process it was clear that the laws themselves would be the best way to consistently evaluate any shifts within cultural heritage policy towards intellectual decolonization because they all could be enforced by the Belizean

government, thus having a clear effect on the management of cultural heritage in Belize. After the creation of the National Institute for Culture and History (NICH) in 2003, NICH was able to carry out policies of their own, such as the 2016 National Cultural Policy. In reviewing the documents metrics used to evaluate the decolonization of policy emerged: heritage typologies and definitions, role of the expert, key actors, heritage uses, all helping to establish whether policies are reinforcing dominant narratives or decentering them.

5. What is the best way to generalize the colonizer and colonized for purposes of this study?

The use of the tropes “colonizer” and “Belizean” or “colonized” represent a false dichotomy that unfortunately is a structural necessity that helps to clarify and move forward the arguments presented in this thesis. The “colonizer” is not a single individual or country. Instead, the term is used here to encompass those who use their power to suppress the people of Belize – whether it is the nations of Spain or Great Britain or a colonial era captain. Further, “Belizeans” or the “colonized” are an exceedingly diverse people with a range of values and opinions that are not one in the same. However, to simplify the comparisons and developments expressed in the thesis this falsely homogenous trope representative of all is used.

II. Research Methodology

A selection of research methodologies function to answer the above questions and provide evidence to drive the thesis argument. A historical survey reviewed secondary sources and some primary sources to understand the extent of the historical colonial narrative in Belize. This survey allowed for the dominant and non-dominant narratives of colonial history to emerge and thus establishes what narratives need to be decentered.

A legal analysis of the cultural policy of Belize was undertaken through the development of metrics that when compared over time offer the opportunity to analyze the policies for their role in reinforcing dominant narratives or decentering them allowing for an assessment of the shift towards intellectual decolonization. The metrics driving the study include: heritage typologies and definitions, role of the expert, key actors, and heritage uses.

A narrative analysis was used to interpret the story presented at colonial heritage sites. Narrative analysis includes different frameworks which allow meaning to be derived from a story.¹⁴ Functional narrative analysis examines the characteristics of a story seeking to understand what was significant about the story.¹⁵ Further, narrative analysis focuses on for whom and by what means a story is told and how the meaning derived from the story connects to the greater discourses present in a community or culture.¹⁶ Here, narrative analysis focuses first on how the narrative is presented on its face - the plain words and images presented to the audience and then focuses what the words and images are telling the audience. This provides the evidence needed to determine if the policy is influencing the narrative and if both the story of the colonized and the colonizer are being told and thus how intellectually decolonized the resulting narrative is.

Finally, the definition of intellectual decolonization, ultimately functions as a sieve through which the analysis will be fed through, ultimately assessing the extent of the intellectual decolonization of cultural heritage policy in Belize. The definition of intellectual decolonization represents a decolonization of the mind: where thoughts, ideas and values are detangled from those of the colonizer.

¹⁴ Mike Allen, "Narrative Analysis," *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*. 4 vols. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2017. doi: 10.4135/9781483381411.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Chapter 2: Colonial History of Belize and Profile of the Country Today

This chapter focuses on an overview of the history of Belize from the colonial era to the present day to grasp the full range of its heritage and what an inclusive heritage should look like. Dominant narratives that emerged include the story of the ancient Maya, economic developments (the export of logwood, mahogany and sugar) and their impact on the country's social developments (including enslavement), the events surrounding independence, and environmental disasters. Less dominant narratives include the stories from the perspective of those who have come to Belize through enslavement or immigration and whose ancestors make up the various ethnic groups in Belize today - such as the Garifuna, Mestizo, Creole, present day indigenous peoples. This overview of Belize's history provides the background necessary to understand that the dominant narratives need to be decentered to make space for the non-dominant narratives. Decentering can be achieved through policy initiatives, emphasizing why implementing intellectually decolonized cultural heritage policy is so important. Further, understanding what narratives need to be decentered provides a bases for assessing how balanced the colonial heritage narrative presented at the case studies' sites are.

I. Brief Colonial History of Belize

In 1493, Pope Alexander VI issued a decree granting Spain the rights to lands and peoples in the Caribbean and Central America by drawing an imaginary line through Brazil and granting them everything West of it.¹⁷ This date acts as the start of the colonial quest for dominance of Belize, a region not yet defined by its modern geo-political boundries and not yet stepped upon by European shoes. In 1506, three Spaniards made contact – Vincente Yanez

¹⁷ Frances Gardiner Davenport, ed., *European Treaties bearing on the History of the United States and its Dependencies to 1648* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1917), 61–63.

Pinzon, Juan Diaz de Solis and Pedro de Ledesma.¹⁸ Indigenous populations, including the Maya, had inhabited the land as far back as 5,000 B.C.E. and through their ancestors can lay claim to the inhabitation of the Americas some 20,000 years earlier.¹⁹ The initial arrival of the Spanish into an already advanced society with the intention of claiming and taking establishes the power dynamic of the colonizer and the colonized that Belizeans are still fighting to overcome today.

The Spanish conquest of Belize was not considered a success. From the early 16th through 17th centuries the Spanish sought gold, to claim land and to convert the indigenous population to Christianity.²⁰ They did not find the gold they were seeking and were unable to completely dominate the indigenous people who actively resisted them.²¹ The Spanish's attempts resulted in the shift of Maya settlements from the coastal Bay of Honduras to the jungle interior of present Guatemala.²² Attempts to bring Christianity to Belize also posed a challenge. Spanish Christian missionaries forced Indigenous peoples into the Christian rite of baptism and to take Christian names.²³ This forced conversion did not take hold and indigenous populations did not fully embrace the religion.²⁴ The effort of the Christian missions, however, are still linked to important institutions in Belize today such as St. John's College in Belize City.²⁵ Nevertheless, Spain continued to claim sovereignty over Belize.²⁶ The failure attributed to the Spanish in their unsuccessful attempt at colonization sets the stage for a new colonizer to come in and claim the

¹⁸ Fred Hunter, *The History of the Sovereignty of Belize* (Belize City: Fred Hunter Burrell Boom Village, Belize District, Belize, P.O. Box 120, 2013), 2.

¹⁹ Nigel O. Bolland, *Belize, a New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 7-8.

²⁰ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 47.

²¹ Mavis Christine Campbell, *Becoming Belize: a history of an outpost of empire searching for identity, 1528-1823* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2011), 92.

²² Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 103.

²³ Ibid, 49.

²⁴ Ibid, 49.

²⁵ "History of St. John's College," *St. Johns College*, accessed January 30, 2021. <https://www.sjc.edu.bz/history>.

²⁶ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 111.

territory, further establishing Belizeans as subservient to those of the West where the colonizers were arriving from.

Though somewhat debated by historians, the English began settling in Belize along the Bay of Honduras in the mid 17th century.²⁷ The first recorded British landing is from 1638 when British seamen were shipwrecked near the coast of Belize by the Belize River and discovered that logwood was found there in abundance.²⁸ The Spanish did not have any settlements along the Bay during this period making it easier for another nation's peoples to inhabit the territory.²⁹ This set the stage for later conflicts among the two nations.

By 1670, about 300 settlers lived along the Bay of Honduras in camps working to cut logwood trees.³⁰ Logwood was shipped to Europe where its sap was used as a colorant in producing dye which would hold its color.³¹ This characteristic made logwood a highly desirable resource as it could be sold for a great profit and was the real catalyst for British interest in the region given its booming textile industry.³² This settlement remained along the coast until the later 18th century when settlers began to move inland seeking additional logwood sources as the quantity along the coast had depleted.³³ Also spurring this desire to move inland was a new natural resource to exploit – mahogany.³⁴ The popularity of mahogany waxed as the need for logwood waned, setting Belize up for a dependence on trade with the West and taking from them the ability to establish themselves as economically self-sufficient.

²⁷ Stephen Caiger, *British Honduras, Past and Present* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1951) 37.

²⁸ Ibid, 29; and *Honduras Almanack* (Belize: Authority of the Legislative Assembly, 1829) 49. Accessible online at https://archive.org/details/ldpd_8627122_000/page/n49/mode/2up?q=1638.

²⁹ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 102-103.

³⁰ Ibid, 101.

³¹ Stephen Caiger, *British Honduras, Past and Present* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1951) 37.

³² Mavis Christine Campbell, *Becoming Belize: a history of an outpost of empire searching for identity, 1528-1823* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2011), 104.

³³ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 104.

³⁴ Stephen Caiger, *British Honduras, Past and Present* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1951) 58.

Working inland required more labor. Trees had to be cut down, transported to the coast and then shipped across the Atlantic.³⁵ African slaves were brought in from Jamaica to solve this problem, introducing the widespread practice of enslavement in the region.³⁶ Slaves had been recorded in the Bay of Honduras since the early 1700's and from the late 1700's onwards slaves were imported from Africa.³⁷ As the value of logwood decreased in European markets mahogany became the key resource to export.³⁸ Mahogany remained the primary export of Belize until its valuation decreased in the early 20th century.³⁹ The labor required to transport mahogany to the coast played a role in maintain the need for cheap labor through enslavement.⁴⁰ Enslavement was not officially abolished in the region until 1833 with the passing of the Abolition Act.⁴¹ Thus, economic development, driven by a desire for the natural resources of Belize, resulted in enslavement and the further perpetuation of colonial values through the establishment of this subservient class. Here, the non-dominant narrative of the enslaved officially claims a place in the history book, but their story during enslavement and after deserves a greater emphasis achievable through the equitable interpretation of colonial narratives at heritage sites.

The expansion inland also resulted in resistance from the Maya residing in the interior.⁴² Attacks by the Maya on mahogany camps were officially reported in 1788, 1802 and 1817.⁴³ The British saw the Maya way of life as a threat because of their use of slash and burn agriculture which destroyed the valuable mahogany.⁴⁴ Again, the colonizer is establishing themselves as the

³⁵ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 131.

³⁶ Ibid, 131.

³⁷ O. Nigel Bolland, *Colonialism and Resistance in Belize*, (Benque del Carmen: Cubola, 2003), 24.

³⁸ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 135.

³⁹ Ibid, 133.

⁴⁰ O. Nigel Bolland, *Colonialism and Resistance in Belize*, (Benque del Carmen: Cubola, 2003), 56.

⁴¹ John Alder Burdon, ed., *Archives of British Honduras from 1801-1840* (London: Sifton Praed & Co., 1934) 34.

⁴² O. Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 14.

⁴³ Ibid, 14.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 14.

dominant and most powerful class of people by paying no regard to the traditional customs of the Maya and focusing only on what is of value to them, economic gain established through a successful mahogany trade.

As the population grew due to the arrival of settlers and slaves working in the timber trade a more formalized governing body began to form. Public Meetings, starting as early as 1738, functioned as a space to generate solutions through the development of law for the community.⁴⁵ Public meetings were not open to the public but rather membership was limited to those who had achieved residency for a certain number of years as well as ownership of a certain amount of property.⁴⁶ These numbers changed as the population of the region grew. Members were able to vote for magistrates who enforced the laws.⁴⁷ As Great Britain's interest in the region grew the Colonial office sent superintendents who claimed they had governmental authority.⁴⁸ A struggle for power between the magistrates and the superintendents developed and was not ended until the laws and rules of Great Britain were officially implemented after Belize became an official colony in 1862.⁴⁹ This illustrates an early, democratic leaning start to the development of formalized law in Belize through the creation of the Public Meeting system. However, Great Britain's successful attempt to take power from the people sets this inclusive development back and the country is still working under a two-part parliamentary system when one branch of the parliament is elected and the other appointed.

Britain's influence in the region was more permanently established after the battle of St. George's Caye in 1798.⁵⁰ The Spanish attacked the settlement along the coast resulting in a short

⁴⁵ C. H. Grant, *The Making of Modern Belize*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 55.

⁴⁶ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 162.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 162.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 164.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 161 and 164.

⁵⁰ Stephen Caiger, *British Honduras, Past and Present* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1951) 97-99.

naval battle between the Spanish and the British in which the British won.⁵¹ Though Spain did not officially relinquish sovereignty, it was clear which colonizer now had the power in the region. Great Britain wielded this power by expanding its administrative base in Belize while still failing to recognize Belize as an official colony.⁵² However, during this time Great Britain did establish the northern boundaries of Belize with Mexico in 1826.⁵³ This battle is important for two reasons. First, it solved, albeit unofficially, any tensions between Spain and Great Britain over who had power over Belize. Second, the Battle of St. George's Caye is celebrated today in Belize on September 10th as an official public and bank holiday.⁵⁴ This again shows the dominance of the colonial narrative in Belize and its continual prominence as the source of history worth remembering today.

In the first half of the 19th century the Bay of Honduras became a key trading center for the Western Caribbean region.⁵⁵ With the threat of Spain lifted, the British were able to take full advantage of the economic benefits Belize's location offered in trading with Central America.⁵⁶ This resulted in an increase in population in the region as well as urban development.⁵⁷ By the 1840's the results of the economic success were obvious in what is now Belize City. Belize had developed from makeshift camps to "well-built homes" and buildings erected in the colonial style.⁵⁸ Colonial structures standing today include St. John's Cathedral (1812) and the Government House (1814).⁵⁹ These two sites, built during the period of growing economic

⁵¹ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 169.

⁵² William Arlington Donohoe, *History of British Honduras* (New York: Colorite Offset Printing Co, 1947), 37.

⁵³ Ibid, 38.

⁵⁴ Tamara Sniffin, "Celebrating St. George's Caye Day," Published September 10, 2015
<https://mybeautifulbelize.com/celebrating-st-georges-caye-day/>.

⁵⁵ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 193.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 194.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 199.

⁵⁸ William Arlington Donohoe, *History of British Honduras* (New York: Colorite Offset Printing Co, 1947), 39.

⁵⁹ John Alder Burdon, ed., *Archives of British Honduras from 1801-1840* (London: Sifton Praed & Co., 1934) 13, 18.

prosperity under Great Britain, were emphasized in historical sources as symbols of urban growth. Their importance, and their continued use in Belize today positions them as ideal case studies for analyzing the narratives presented at colonial sites. The story of the colonizer appears obvious, how well is the story of the colonized told?

By the 1850's, dependence on one crop brought Belize into an economic depression.⁶⁰ The price of mahogany dropped and this was exacerbated by the increased cost of mahogany production.⁶¹ The mahogany boom of the 1830's and 1840's had pushed production further into the interior resulting in expensive labor and transit costs.⁶² The British attempted to solve this problem by encouraging a more diverse economy through agricultural development, which failed.⁶³ In the 1860's sugar production proved a small but short lived success.⁶⁴ The British Honduras Company was a largest sugar producer and abandoned factories which still dot the landscape in the south and north of the country today.⁶⁵ Chicle, a natural gum used in producing commercial chewing gum, began being exported in the 1870's.⁶⁶ The economic depression is important because it is the root of an economic struggle in the country that still persists to this day. The lack of diversity in economic ventures persists with its tourism centered market and makes the country vulnerable to global fluctuations it does not have control over.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 20.

⁶¹ Ibid, 20.

⁶² Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 229-231.

⁶³ Ibid, 235.

⁶⁴ D. Morris, *The Colony of British Honduras* (London, 1883), 89 – 92.

⁶⁵ Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 30; and “100 years of Southern Sugar History Preserved,” *7 News Belize*, published May 7, 2009 <http://7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=13943>.

⁶⁶ Odile Hoffman, *British Honduras: The Invention of a Colonial Territory*, (Benque Viejo del Carmen: Cubola Productions, 2014) 30.

⁶⁷ “2020 Investment Climate Statements: Belize,” U.S. Department of State, accessed March 1, 2021 <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-investment-climate-statements/belize/>.

The latter half of the 19th century brought with it the official recognition of Belize as a colony by Great Britain with colonial status finally granted in 1862. With this status Belize had to give up its self-governance. In 1870 the local government dissolved and by 1871 a Crown Colony government was introduced.⁶⁸ A legislative council, populated with members nominated by Great Britain, now managed the colony.⁶⁹ Attempts were made by locals to add elected members to the legislative council but they did not succeed.⁷⁰ This exertion of political power and official inoculation of the governing style of Great Britain again points to the development of unequal power dynamics amongst the colonizer and the colonized.

The population of Belize also started to diversify in the 19th century. Most of the settlement's population was of African origin until the mid 1800's.⁷¹ This included slaves brought directly from Africa as well as slaves arriving from the British West Indies.⁷² The Creole population in Belize can trace its ancestry to these roots. The Garifuna arrived in the early 1800's from other parts of the Caribbean.⁷³ In the 1840's Maya and Mestizo's fleeing the Caste War in the Yucatan arrived.⁷⁴ Other immigrant groups also arrived from India and China.⁷⁵ Later immigration movements in the 20th century include Mennonites and Central American refugees from El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala.⁷⁶ These immigration patterns, however, established geographic distributions of ethnic communities. The Maya and Mestizo generally lived in the

⁶⁸ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 249.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 249.

⁷⁰ Assad Shoman, *Belize's Independence and Decolonization in Latin America – Guatemala, Britain and the UN* (New York: Palgrave, 2010) 35.

⁷¹ Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 25.

⁷² Ibid, 25.

⁷³ Odile Hoffman, *British Honduras: The Invention of a Colonial Territory*, (Benque Viejo del Carmen: Cubola Productions, 2014) 30.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 30; and Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 26.

⁷⁵ Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 26.

⁷⁶ Odile Hoffman, *British Honduras: The Invention of a Colonial Territory*, (Benque Viejo del Carmen: Cubola Productions, 2014) 16.

north and west of the country; the Garifuna in the south along the coast, and the Creole and white population in Belize City.⁷⁷ This geographical distribution of the diverse population of Belize generally holds true today and continues to drive the types of heritage representative of these regions.

By the turn of the 20th century, the state of Belize's economy had not improved. Unemployment was high, mechanization of industry reduced the need for manual labor, and unrest was building. Protests after World War I led by former servicemen focused on the lack of jobs as well as the racist treatment of Black Belizeans resulting in a few reform projects.⁷⁸ This unrest set the stage for the independence movement whose origin is credited as starting in the 1930's.⁷⁹ The Great Depression further aggravated the stagnated economy by reducing the need for mahogany and chicle, still Belize's top exports.⁸⁰ In 1931, the worst hurricane in Belize's history struck Belize City.⁸¹ An estimated 2,000 people died.⁸² The response from the British was to increase the controls of the governor but was largely seen as inadequate.⁸³ In 1934, a boycott and strike of the merchant houses and the largest mahogany company began the labor movement's fight for improved economic conditions.⁸⁴ The governor responded by creating relief work program resulting in the creation of 200 miles of roads as well as a daily ration of

⁷⁷ Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 26.

⁷⁸ C. H. Grant, *The Making of Modern Belize*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 59, and Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 260.

⁷⁹ Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 25.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 32.

⁸¹ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 260.

⁸² "Tale of hurricane told by jerseyite: Montclair radio operator tells of disaster in British Honduras," *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 16, 1931. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/historical-newspapers/tale-hurricane-told-jerseyite/docview/226235011/se-2?accountid=10226>

⁸³ Assad Shoman, *Belize's Independence and Decolonization in Latin America – Guatemala, Britain and the UN* (New York: Palgrave, 2010) 35; and Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 32.

⁸⁴ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 260.

rice distributed at prison gates.⁸⁵ This, however, was not enough and Belizeans clamored for some form of representation in their government. In 1935, a new constitution was passed allowing locals who met certain land holding and income qualifications to finally be elected to the legislative council.⁸⁶ Here, economic struggles functioned as the catalyst for the first strides towards political independence from Great Britain and thus are the roots of the political decolonization efforts in the country.

Discontent with the government was further translated into action after World War II. Starting in 1947, anti-colonial sentiments could be heard in speeches given at the “battlefield,” the site of the current Central Park in Belize City.⁸⁷ Public discontent was further heightened by Britain’s unwillingness to give up its colonial power. Great Britain’s creation of the British West Indies Federation, an organization established to create a political union amongst its members, was seen by the people as a way for the colonies in what Britain referred to as the West Indies to function as one large colony.⁸⁸ In 1950, the People’s United Party (PUP) was formed out of the outrage over the devaluation of the British Honduras dollar in 1949.⁸⁹ The devaluation reduced the purchasing power of Belizeans resulting in the rise in the cost of imported goods Belizeans were highly dependent on.⁹⁰ The governor carried out this action against the wishes of the legislative council of Belize who had voted against it. Thus, PUP was formed seeking “to achieve and preserve for the people of this country national unity and political and economic

⁸⁵ Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 33.

⁸⁶ Assad Shoman, *Belize’s Independence and Decolonization in Latin America – Guatemala, Britain and the UN* (New York: Palgrave, 2010) 35.

⁸⁷ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 260.

⁸⁸ Assad Shoman, *Belize’s Independence and Decolonization in Latin America – Guatemala, Britain and the UN* (New York: Palgrave, 2010) 36; and “The West Indies Federation,” Caricom Caribbean Community, accessed March 10, 2021 <https://caricom.org/the-west-indies-federation/>.

⁸⁹ Nigel Bolland, *Belize, A New Nation in Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 114.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 114.

independence.”⁹¹ These economic struggles attributed to the colonizer further drove the desire for an independent Belize and political independence. Further, the organized efforts of PUP act as a signpost in understanding when intellectual decolonization began. Its roots of course can be traced to earlier efforts at the start of the 20th century but the formation of PUP gives intellectual decolonization a public voice and the power to share their goals more effectively with the whole population of Belize.

Great Britain’s hesitancy to award independence was complicated by issues surrounding Guatemala’s territorial claim to Belizean territory. In 1859, Guatemala and Great Britain signed and ratified a “Convention between Her Majesty and the Republic of Guatemala, relative to the Boundary of British Honduras.”⁹² In this treaty the boundary between Belize and Guatemala was formalized. However, Article 7 of the treaty, in which required Great Britain and Guatemala to use their best efforts to establish a means of communication from Guatemala City to the Atlantic Coast, has posed problematic.⁹³ Article 7 was not executed due to the cost of creating such a road connecting the two and as such Guatemala declared starting in 1884 that it would not be bound by the borders between Belize and Guatemala set out in the treaty.⁹⁴ This continued into the 20th century and in 1946 Guatemala declared the treaty to be void which was followed by threats of invasion.⁹⁵ Great Britain then organized a military presence in Belize to thwart such threats.⁹⁶ The fear of invasion should the British remove their military presence thus slowed the independence process though the military remained to protect the borders until 1993, even after

⁹¹ Assad Shoman, *Belize’s Independence and Decolonization in Latin America – Guatemala, Britain and the UN* (New York: Palgrave, 2010) 36.

⁹² Ibid, 30.

⁹³ Ibid, 31.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 33.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 33.

⁹⁶ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 262.

independence was won.⁹⁷ This incident shows how even after gaining independence, Belize was still dependent on the resources of Great Britain indicating the continuing damage done by the colonizer in exerting colonial dominance.

Though political independence was still almost two decades away, in 1964 Belize finally achieve self-government.⁹⁸ This is another signpost in the development of a decolonized intellectual thought because Belize now had more autonomy to create its own laws. As such, a National Assembly was established as the legislative body in Belize City. Two houses, one elected and one appointed, was modeled after the Westminster parliamentary system.⁹⁹ Bills must be passed by both houses and signed by the Governor General to be passed into law.¹⁰⁰ The Westminster parliamentary system is still the form of government running Belize today.

In 1961, the worst hurricane to strike Belize touched down as Hurricane Hattie.¹⁰¹ This hurricane almost completely flattened Belize City, the then capital of Belize, and drove the decision made by the Belizean government to not repair the capital but rather to move it.¹⁰² Other hurricanes had hit Belize City in the past including a severe hurricane that hit in 1931 causing 2,500 deaths and severe damage to the city.¹⁰³ The disaster of Hattie and the knowledge that Belize City would continue to bear the brunt of hurricanes heading towards the country spurred

⁹⁷ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 264.

⁹⁸ Assad Shoman, *Belize's Independence and Decolonization in Latin America – Guatemala, Britain and the UN* (New York: Palgrave, 2010) 42.

⁹⁹ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 264.

¹⁰⁰ "National Assembly," *National Assembly of Belize*, accessed March 10, 2021
<https://www.nationalassembly.gov.bz/national-assembly/>.

¹⁰¹ Joe Iyo, *An Oral History of Land, Property, and Real Estate Development in Belize City*, (Belize: University College of Belize Press, 1998) 10.

¹⁰² Ibid, 11.

¹⁰³ Victoria Day-Wilson, "Hurricanes in Belize and Historic Storms," accessed April 1, 2021
<https://www.hachettebookgroup.com/travel/planning/hurricanes-in-belize-and-historic-storms/>.

the government to relocate the capital from Belize City to the new city of Belmopan.¹⁰⁴ This decision was unpopular and is still considered an unpopular decision today.¹⁰⁵

As the fight for independence continued the British Colonial office responded in a supportive way by officially changing the name of the country from British Honduras to Belize.¹⁰⁶ This marks another important moment in the fight for independence and further supports an intellectual decolonization of Belize. Finally, in 1981, Belize gained political independence from Great Britain.¹⁰⁷ This marked the end to the fight for political independence and the official point of political decolonization of Belize. With political decolonization accomplished intellectual decolonization still remains a work in progress.

II. Profile of the Country

Today, Belize is an independent nation of 399,600 people.¹⁰⁸ Nine ethnicities are reported: Mestizo (52.9%), Creole (25.9%), Maya (11%), Garifuna (6.1%), East Indian (3.9%), Mennonite (3.6%), Asian (1%), white (1.2%), other (1.2%).¹⁰⁹ English is the official language spoken by 62.95 of the population. Spanish (56.6%), Creole (44.6%), Maya (10.5%), German (3.2%), Garifuna (2.9%) and other (1.8%) follow suite. These statistics are important because they provide an understanding of the composition of Belize today – how the people identify themselves and what languages they speak. Understanding these statistics will further support arguments that colonial sites need to do more to be representative of the full story of their sites

¹⁰⁴ Victoria Day-Wilson, “Hurricanes in Belize and Historic Storms,” accessed April 1, 2021 <https://www.hachettebookgroup.com/travel/planning/hurricanes-in-belize-and-historic-storms/>.

¹⁰⁵ Joe Iyo, *An Oral History of Land, Property, and Real Estate Development in Belize City*, (Belize: University College of Belize Press, 1998) 11.

¹⁰⁶ “Belize History,” Belize.com, accessed April 1, 2021 <https://belize.com/history/>.

¹⁰⁷ “A Guide to the United States’ History of Recognition, Diplomatic, and Consular Relations, by Country, since 1776: Belize,” U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian, accessed March 1, 2021 <https://history.state.gov/countries/belize>.

¹⁰⁸ “Central America: Belize,” CIA World Factbook, last updated September 2020 <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/static/4664031114ecb09516562a742578da62/BH-summary.pdf>

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

such that all ethnic groups are represented and that sites share information in languages that all Belizean's speak.

Additionally, the current state of the Belizean economy explains why creating a national identity is so important to the Belizean government. People are leaving the country, the country has a huge income disparity between rich and poor as well as a huge international trade deficit.¹¹⁰ These issues require solutions bolder than an inclusive management of cultural heritage but this provides an understanding as to why creating a national identity is so key for Belize, they seek to create a people proud of their culture and hope to see this effect trickling down, helping to solve these problems.

III. Conclusion

This chapter traces the colonial history of Belize providing the background necessary to understand what the dominant narratives are in Belizean history. Understanding the dominant narratives allows policies and case study narratives to be evaluated for how much work they are doing to decenter the dominant narrative and make space for the non-dominant narrative. This ultimately contributes to the ability to assess the intellectual decolonization of the cultural heritage policy in Belize through the analysis of colonial heritage sites.

The following dominant narratives were established through a survey of some primary but mainly secondary sources: the story of the ancient Maya, economic developments due to colonialism, the impact of such economic developments especially enslavement and economic dependence on trade, the fight for independence based on economic issues and to an extent environmental disasters. Non-dominant narratives, the narratives that the policy should be working to emphasize and the colonial sites should be working to include alongside the dominant

¹¹⁰ "Central America: Belize," CIA World Factbook, last updated September 2020 <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/static/4664031114ecb09516562a742578da62/BH-summary.pdf>.

colonial narratives are the stories of the enslaved, the immigrants and the perspectives of the Garifuna, Mestizo, Creole, present day Maya and other indigenous peoples in Belize today.

Chapter 3: Development of Cultural Heritage Policy in Belize

This chapter traces the development of cultural heritage policy in Belize by focusing on the policy generated after self-governance began in 1964. This allows for an analysis of the development of policy at the start of Belize's ability to act independently from Great Britain. A government is limited to five tools when working to preserve built heritage.¹¹¹ They can exercise ownership and operation: "the state will do X."¹¹² They can regulate: "you must (or must not) do X."¹¹³ They can incentives or disincentives: "If you do X, the state will do Y."¹¹⁴ They can allocate property rights: "You have a right to do X, and the state will enforce that right."¹¹⁵ Finally, the government can offer information: "You should do X or You need to know Y in order to do X."¹¹⁶ Here, Belize utilizes all five tools when developing their cultural heritage policies offering complete control over the preservation of the built environment. To understand how the government uses these tools a survey of all heritage related policy in Belize was conducted. This resulted in the discovery of twelve different documents including enforceable acts, international treaties and overarching policy documents. This information is summarized in Table 1:

| Year | Policy Name | Purpose | Notes |
|------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1972 | Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Ordinance | Establish definitions of antiquities and ancient monuments; powers of minister in executing the act; establishes archaeological reserves; example forms | First law in Belize managing cultural heritage objects and sites |

¹¹¹ For a more in-depth explanation see: J. Mark Schuster, John de Monchaux, "Five things to Do," in *Preserving the Built Heritage Tools for Implementation*, edited by Charles A. Riley II (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1997), 3-11.

¹¹² Ibid, 6.

¹¹³ Ibid, 6.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 6.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 6.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 6.

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1976 | Cerro Maya Archaeological Reserve Order | Creation of Cerro Maya Archaeological Reserve | Example of processes established in '72 policy functioning |
| 1981 | National Park System Act, Revised 2000 | Establishes national parks, nature reserves, wildlife sanctuaries and natural monuments and outlines rules for their management | Repealed by National Protected Areas System Act, 2015 |
| 1985 | Lamanai Archaeological Reserve Order | Creation of Lamanai Archaeological Reserve | Example of processes established in '72 policy functioning |
| 1986 | Archaeological Reserves (Admissions) Order | Lists Mayan sites open to the public, when they are open and admissions fees. Nationals are admitted free on Sunday | Example of processes established in '72 policy functioning |
| 1990 (ratified) | UNESCO Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954) | Treaty focusing on the protection of cultural heritage during armed conflict ¹¹⁷ | Ratified, indicating intent to be bound by the treaty |
| | Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970) | Convention working to prevent illicit trafficking of cultural property by establishing a common framework ¹¹⁸ | Ratified, indicating intent to be bound by the treaty |
| | UNESCO Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and National Heritage (1972) | Defines the types of sites and the required criteria for inscription on the World Heritage List and the duties of state parties in this regard ¹¹⁹ | Ratified, indicating intent to be bound by the treaty |
| 2003 | 2000 National Institute of Culture and History Act, Chapter 331, revised 2003 | Establishes the framework for the development and | NICH and its divisions are |

¹¹⁷ “1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict,” UNESCO.org, accessed March 10, 2021, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/armed-conflict-and-heritage/convention-and-protocols/1954-hague-convention/>.

¹¹⁸ “The 1970 Convention,” UNESCO.org, accessed March 10, 2021, <https://en.unesco.org/fighttrafficking/1970>.

¹¹⁹ “The World Heritage Convention,” UNESCO.org, accessed March 10, 2021, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/convention/>.

| | | | |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | implementation of cultural heritage policy in Belize. Creates NICH and its divisions (Museum of Belize, IRMAC, ISCR and ICA) and repeals the 1972 Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act | still active today |
| 2007 | UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) | Safeguards and raises the profile of intangible heritage and encourages multilateral cooperation ¹²⁰ | Ratified, indicating intent to be bound by the treaty |
| 2012 | Belize Constitution Act 2000, updated 2012 | Constitutional Monarchy; Executive authority of Belize is vested in Her Majesty; Governor-General is Her Majesty's representative in Belize; Ministers are principal executive instrument of house and senate | Gives power to ministers who carryout cultural heritage related legislation |
| 2015 | National Protected Areas Systems Act | Outlines rules for their management. Establishes separate jurisdictions for national protected areas, and archaeological reserves, ancient sites and antiquities | Repeals 1981 National Park System Act |
| 2016 | Belize National Cultural Policy (NICH) | Policy (non-binding) document describing the goals of cultural policy in Belize | |
| 2017 | National Cultural Heritage Act | Enforceable framework for cultural heritage | |

After reviewing all documents enforceable laws such as ordinances and acts were selected for analysis. This established a constant for generating comparisons, differences and

¹²⁰ "Text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage," UNESCO.org, accessed March 10, 2021, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/convention>

tracing developments as the laws shifted towards an intellectual decolonization. In addition, five metrics emerged through the initial analysis as a means to evaluate each law. These metrics reflect how the act functions to reinforce dominant narratives or decenter them – resulting in a more intellectually decolonized policy. The metrics are: heritage typologies, definitions, key actors, publics acknowledged, uses of heritage and institutional capacity building.

Further, when comparing how the framework of the laws change it is important to understand what aspects of the legislation were inherited from the British. First, Belize has inherited a common law framework for creating and enforcing laws.¹²¹ This means that how laws are framed and the required elements that make up them are going to be very similar to British Law. This, however, does not influence the content of the laws but rather their syntax.

What content was inherited from the British in regards to cultural property law? British Honduras introduced heritage legislation as early as 1894.¹²² Unfortunately, I was unable to obtain this legislation. However, it is clear from secondary sources that European governments sought to establish colonial preservation laws which reflected the European values found in preserving ancient monuments and their valued materials.¹²³ These criteria of ancient monuments and materials is evident in the early preservation laws of Belize. Thus, the extent to which Belize moves away from these terms is an element of note but not a fully defining metric when tracing the development of policy and its eventual shift towards an intellectually decolonized one.

¹²¹ “History of the Legislature of Belize,” Belize National Assembly, accessed March 1, 2021

<https://www.nationalassembly.gov.bz/history-of-the-legislature-of-belize/>

¹²² Jamie J. Awe, “Cultural Resource Management in Belize,” in *Cultural Resource Management: A Collaborative Primer for Archaeologists*, edited by Thomas F. King in collaboration with Jaime L. Bach, Katherine Bracken Ward, Nancy Farrell, Jay W. Gray, Rebecca Hawkins, Dawn Johnson, Hannah Mattson, Fred McGhee, and Jason Nez (New York: Berghahn, 2020), 117.

¹²³ Astrid, Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage: Preserving the Past in France, Germany and England, 1789–1914. New Studies in European History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2013.

The remainder of this chapter will proceed by analyzing the following laws driven by the metrics described above: 1972 Ancient Monuments & Antiquities Ordinance, the 1981 Park Systems Act, the 2003 National Institute of Culture and History Act, Ch. 331, the 2015 National Protected Areas Systems Act and finally the 2017 National Cultural Heritage Preservation Act.

By assessing their definitions, objectives, functions, systems and procedures, it is possible to trace the development cultural heritage policy in Belize as well as discern how the policy reflects the changing heritage ideals in the country and a shift towards intellectual decolonization through its capacity to decenter dominant colonial narratives.

A. 1972 Ancient Monuments & Antiquities Ordinance

The first act taken by the now self-governing country of Belize in relation to cultural heritage was the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Ordinance of 1972.¹²⁴ This act allowed me to evaluate the following metrics: definitions, heritage typology, publicly acknowledged, and key actors. This ordinance also established a starting point for tracing the development of cultural heritage policy in Belize through these metrics given the unavailability of the 1894 law.

This ordinance starts by defining ancient monuments. An ancient monument is “any structure or building erected by man or any natural feature transformed or worked by man, or the remains or any part, thereof...that has been in existence for one hundred years or more.”¹²⁵ An antiquity is defined as “any article manufactured or worked by man, whether of stone, pottery, metal, wood, glass or any other substance, or any part thereof.”¹²⁶ If an antiquity belongs to the Mayan or other American civilization then it must be 150 years old or more to qualify.¹²⁷ If an antiquity belongs to a civilization other than Mayan or, American that it too must be 150 years

¹²⁴ See Appendix B for the full text of the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Ordinance, 1972.

¹²⁵ Belize Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Ordinance, Chapter 259, 1972, 1.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, 1.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 1.

old or more to qualify.¹²⁸ In line with common thinking of the era there is nothing describing or alluding to intangible heritage. The definitions focus solely on the object and the monument. Further, age and relationship to a civilization are the only key signifiers for when an object is considered an antiquity or ancient monument. Important events, peoples or scientific or artistic developments are not listed as reasons for categorizing an object or place. Further, Mayan is the only indigenous group specifically identified as a creator of heritage. Yes, “other American” civilizations are mentioned as well as “other” civilizations that are not Maya or “other American.” However, highlighting the Maya indicates that this group’s heritage is important, perhaps more important, than the other heritages that exist in Belize and are not worth singling out. Further, it shows that preserving Maya heritage is a priority for the Belizean government. Arguably, this indicates the presence of British values in what connotes heritage in this document given the historic archaeological efforts of the British in Belize focusing on Maya heritage.¹²⁹

Next, all monuments and antiquities no matter their status before the ordinance vest in the crown.¹³⁰ This means that technically once registered it is considered the property of Great Britain. There is, however, reasonable compensation for registering an antiquity or monument.¹³¹ New findings, at the option of the minister, can also be acquired by the crown.¹³² Finding new monuments and antiquities can be done by any “suitable person or group of persons” as long as they have permission of the Minister in the form of a permit.¹³³ These suitable persons or groups

¹²⁸ Ibid, 1.

¹²⁹For a short history of archaeology in Belize with references to British archaeological campaigns see David M. Pendergast, “The Center and the Edge: Archaeology in Belize, 1809-1992,” *Journal of World Prehistory* 7, no. 2 (1993): 1-33.

¹³⁰ Belize Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Ordinance, Chapter 259, 1972, 1.

¹³¹ Ibid, 2.

¹³² Ibid, 3.

¹³³ Ibid, 3.

can enter upon any land where ancient monuments or antiquities may be situated, search for them and excavate them.¹³⁴ However, if the land is privately owned a landowner must be given the opportunity to consent.¹³⁵ This seems a little bit of a formality because if consent is “unreasonably” withheld or necessary for “cultural or scientific or salvage reasons” a permit can be issued without such consent.¹³⁶ Additionally, the Minister can grant permit for the destruction of an ancient monument or antiquity if for agricultural or industrial reasons.¹³⁷ The Minister is the government head responsible for ancient monuments and antiquities or any person with her permission to carry out her functions under the ordinance.¹³⁸

The Archaeological Commissioner (or any person authorized by her in writing) can enter lands that are granted or leased by the crown at any time.¹³⁹ The Archaeological Commissioner (or any person authorized by her in writing) can, with notice, enter upon any land for the purpose of searching for ancient monuments and antiquities.¹⁴⁰ Antiquities cannot be imported, exported, sold or traded without a license from the Minister and the Archaeological Commissioner has the power to search for illicit monuments or antiquities at locations or upon persons where reasonable cause is found.¹⁴¹ Further, the Archaeological Commissioner can stop operations on any land to prevent the destruction of an ancient monument or antiquity.¹⁴² This thus establishes a key actor with the power to manage such institutional issues.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 3.

¹³⁵ Ibid, 4.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 4.

¹³⁷ Ibid 4.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 1.

¹³⁹ Ibid, 4.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 5.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 5.

¹⁴² Ibid, 6.

The Minister also has the power to declare Archaeological Reserves.¹⁴³ An Archaeological Reserve is land containing or adjacent to an ancient monument.¹⁴⁴ Times when Archaeological Reserves will be open to the public are to be published along with any entry fees. This shows how important it is for the government to keep the public informed about historic sites and to encourage them to learn about their heritage. Additionally, the Minister also is given the power to manage the Archaeological Reserves as well as appoint other parties to carry out the duties necessary to run them.¹⁴⁵

Summary

In summary, this ordinance establishes the cultural heritage policy for Belize in 1972. When analyzed with these metrics in mind: definitions, heritage typology, publics acknowledged, and key actors the ordinance sets the initial starting point to which the progress of other cultural heritage policies towards an intellectually decolonized heritage can be compared with. This policy is reflective of what is deemed important in the Western world with its focus solely on objects and sites. There is no reference to intangible heritage. Further, heritage is considered an “antiquity” or “ancient monument” based on its age. There is no emphasis on any other reasons as to why something should be considered an antiquity or monument beyond this notion of age. Interestingly, on the “Form for Registration of Antiquities” there is an empty box titled with “associations.”¹⁴⁶ Which perhaps is a space where connections beyond period or phase of history can be made. Further, only one specific heritage is referenced, the Maya, which indicates the British influence on the ordinance given their interest in archaeological work related to the Maya. Finally, this is a document written with the assumption that experts are the

¹⁴³ Ibid, 5.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 5.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 5.

¹⁴⁶ Belize Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Ordinance, Chapter 259, 1972, 8.

ones who have the power to declare when something is heritage and to manage heritage without any influence of the local community or their needs.

Ultimately, the ability of future legislation improve upon this initial ordinance will illustrate the capacity of Belize's heritage policy to decenter itself from its inherited Western bias towards what is worth preserving in the built environment and through this work to decenter the historical narratives dominating its heritage field.

B. 1981 National Park System Act

The focus of this act is on the preservation of specific areas of land through the creation of a National Park System.¹⁴⁷ This act allowed me to evaluate the following metrics; definitions, heritage typologies, key actors, and institutional capacity building. The expansion of heritage typologies and increased institutional capacity building with the creation of the National Park System support the decentering of dominant narratives because of this more inclusive view of heritage. The act creates four typologies within the National Park System: National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Nature Reserve, and Natural Monument.¹⁴⁸ The definition of National Parks describes the protection and preservation of an area with “natural and scenic values of national significance for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public.”¹⁴⁹ A Wildlife Sanctuary is “any area reserved as a nature conservation reserve...for the protection of nationally significant species, groups of species, biotic communities or physical features of the environment requiring specific human manipulation for their perpetuation.”¹⁵⁰ A Nature Reserve is any area reserved “as a scientific reserve...for the protection of nature...and to maintain natural processes in an undisturbed state in order to have ecologically representative examples...available for scientific

¹⁴⁷ See Appendix C for the full text of the Belize Park Systems Act, Chapter 215, 1982.

¹⁴⁸ Belize Park Systems Act, Chapter 215, 1982, 7.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 6.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 6

study, monitoring, education and maintenance of genetic resources.”¹⁵¹ Finally, a Natural Monument is any area reserved for the protection and preservation of nationally significant natural features of special interest or unique characteristics to provide opportunities for interpretation, education, research and public appreciation.” These four definitions focus on the preservation of the natural world, as well as its flora and fauna. The definitions also focus on “nationally significant” aspects of the natural world, thus implying that what is worth preserving serves a greater purpose by contributing to a national arsenal of natural heritage. In addition, cultural features – or historical and paleontological sites and objects – are also defined but not included in the definitions of the typologies.¹⁵²

The act grants the Minister (responsible for the national park system) the power to declare a specific area of land a National Park, Nature Reserve, Wildlife Sanctuary or Natural Monument.¹⁵³ The Minister can also declare via an order any alterations to their borders as well terminate their existence.¹⁵⁴ Entry to national parks, nature reserves, wildlife sanctuaries and natural monuments requires a permit and payment of a fee.¹⁵⁵

Restrictions on the uses for each typology varies and each emphasizes specific issues related to the preservation of their type. National parks restrict entry except for purposes of education, recreation and scientific research.¹⁵⁶ In nature reserves disruption of the fauna and flora is prohibited in all circumstances.¹⁵⁷ In both, animals and plants cannot be hunted, damaged, collected or destroyed.¹⁵⁸ In wildlife sanctuaries hunting, killing or destruction of wild animals or

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 6

¹⁵² Ibid, 5.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 7.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 7.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 8-9.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, 8.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 8.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, 8.

their nests and eggs is prohibited.¹⁵⁹ Finally, natural monuments cannot have their natural features destroyed but they can be used for “interpretation, education, appreciation and research.”¹⁶⁰ A strict reading of this section suggests that given the specific issues highlighted amongst the typologies any issue not identified is permissible. For example, restrictions related to national parks are referenced in subsections (a) and subsection (c).¹⁶¹ This indicates that the legislation is written in a way that precisely links specific restrictions to specific sites and that assumptions about restrictions related to the sites is not applicable given the specificity to which restrictions are identified in relation to the site. This idea is further exemplified by a close reading of subsection (e). Here, Natural Monument restrictions are discussed and there is no language concerned about killing or destroying flora and fauna.¹⁶² Thus, because killing and destroying is not specifically articulated it is thus allowed, as long as the “natural features” of the Natural Monument are not disturbed. This matters because when using this legislation as a tool of enforcement for preserving these natural sites there are specific gaps that allow for different interpretations of the policy and thus different executions of the policy in the real world. Policy that is loosely phrased fails to achieve its goals when those implementing it are not in complete understanding of its purpose. This also can be read (with the help of the summary alongside the section) as what are considered the *essential* features of a site. Thus, the specific issues that are highlighted are the most important and their occurrence would disturb the purposes of the site for which the legislation was established to protect in the first place. This makes sense given Section 6, which lists a series of prohibited acts in all four typologies which are nevertheless allowed

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 8.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 8.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 8.

¹⁶² Ibid, 8.

through section 7's exemptions and with authorization and permission of the Administrator of the site.¹⁶³

Section 6's restrictions focus on outlining prohibited acts, preventing alterations or destruction to sites and their flora and fauna.¹⁶⁴ The removal of an antiquity or other object of cultural or natural value is also listed amongst the prohibited acts. Antiquities are defined in this act according to the 1972 Ancient Monuments & Antiquities Ordinance.¹⁶⁵ Thus, further protection is offered for the ancient sites and antiquities referenced in the 1972 ordinance. This connects the two pieces of legislation allowing for the 1981 Park Systems Act to build upon the 1972 Ancient Monuments & Antiquities Ordinance in a way that creates greater protections for cultural heritage in Belize.

The exemptions listed in Section 7 allows the Minister to grant permits to scientists, "bona fide" organizations as well as qualified professionals or specialists for research that may be restricted by Section 6. This specifically includes collecting flora or fauna, archaeological explorations, scientific research and educational activities.¹⁶⁶ This section suggests the importance of experts in studying and deciding what is considered cultural heritage in Belize. Further, it gives them greater access to the heritage than the average citizen who would not be allowed to collect specimens or perform archaeological expeditions on their own.

The final sections of the act give authority to the Minister to establish rules for the conduct and management of each individual typology or the National Parks System as a whole.¹⁶⁷ This includes rules like no overnight camping or selling of food and beverages except by licensed

¹⁶³ Ibid, 9.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 9.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 5.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, 10.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 10.

parties to how these sites should be identified (with signs) and gives power to the Minister to approve management plans as designed by officers at each site.¹⁶⁸ The Minister is also able to grant licenses allowing visitors to the site. Interestingly, the position of Chief Forest Officer is created and the Chief Forest Officer is responsible for the administration of the act.¹⁶⁹ It is unclear but likely that the Chief Forest Officer still reports to the Minister as part of the chain of command. Finally, procedures for committing offences against the act are outlined as well as punishments.¹⁷⁰

Summary

In summary, this act focuses on the creation of a National Parks System and its four separate typologies. As established through the applicable metrics, it also functions as a means of creating a more inclusive heritage capable of decentering the dominant narrative so focused on the colonial story and ancient monuments. It gives power to a Minister to execute the act allowing the minister to create rules, regulations and officers. It specifically references the 1972 Ancient Monuments & Antiquities Ordinance as well as includes antiquities and ancient sites within its purview. The Act also indicates the values for these heritage sites that were in existence at the time of the policy's creation. There is no reference to intangible heritage, or that a site's relationship to important historical events, scientific discoveries or peoples (no matter its natural state) can also allow it to qualify for protection, thus not expanding on values established in the 1972 ordinance. Experts are considered the purveyors of knowledge regarding heritage. Certain aspects of natural heritage are classified as essential within the four typologies that are created establishing what is valued about those sites whether it is flora, fauna, or the natural features

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 10-12.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 13.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 13.

itself. Further, these values also indicate gaps in the legislation and raise concerns for how the policy will be implemented. Ultimately, the policy expands the purview of heritage in Belize to include natural heritage and sets the stage for Belize's only UNESCO world heritage site, the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System.

C. 2000 National Institute of Culture and History Act, Revised 2003

This act functions as the body of legislation working to protect and manage all cultural resources in the country.¹⁷¹ Revisions in 2003 only updated forms associated with the act.¹⁷² This act allowed me to analyze the following metrics: key actors, publics acknowledged, uses of heritage, and institutional capacity buildings. This analysis reveals that with this policy Belize has truly moved beyond the confines of the 1972 Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Ordinance and has shifted towards an intellectually decolonized cultural heritage policy.

First, the act established the National Institute of Culture and History (NICH).¹⁷³ This institution implements the objectives and principles established in the act, to coordinate and supervise policies and programs, and to do “any other thing which is concerned directly or indirectly with the strengthening, preservation or development of cultural, historic or artistic activity in Belize.”¹⁷⁴

Section 4 describes the objects and principles of NICH which show what is valued about heritage and exemplifies a shift to a more inclusive understanding of heritage. Objective (b) is “to foster cross-cultural understanding and mutual respect, given Belize’s multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual nature.”¹⁷⁵ This objective acknowledges Belize’s diverse communities

¹⁷¹ See Appendix D for the full text of the 2000 National Institute of Culture and History Act.

¹⁷² See Appendix E for the full text of the 2003 National Institute of Culture and History Act Chapter 331 Revised Edition.

¹⁷³ Belize National Institute of Culture and History Act, Chapter 331, 2000, 11.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, 12.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 11.

in a way that does not signal out one particular group. This is exciting because it shows that all cultures are important in contributing to “cross-cultural understanding and mutual respect.” This allows room for an equitable and decolonized heritage policy to develop. Inclusion can also be seen in objective (c): “to apply the principle of decentralization in order to ensure that the several districts of Belize are beneficiaries of and contributors to cultural policies and programs.”¹⁷⁶ The idea of decentralizing NICH amongst the districts of Belize acknowledges that different ethnicities tend to populate different geographic areas of Belize and their communities have needs that are different than the needs of communities located in Belmopan or Belize City where government organizations are usually headquartered. Thus, by decentralizing NICH is able to better serve these communities. Next, objective (e) describes the importance of “the greatest possible participation of civil society” when making and executing policies and programs.¹⁷⁷ Cultural workers, artists and organized groups are specifically indicated. The prospect of participation by “civil society” in the “making and execution of policies and programs” again points to the development of an inclusive understanding of heritage. Seeking feedback from a pool of people beyond cultural experts allows for a greater diversity in issues raised. However, though participation is not limited to cultural workers, artists and organized groups they are signaled out as desirable participants. Local community groups can fit under the umbrella of organized groups, this is not defined, but the vagueness of the term and the fact that community is not emphasized while other groups are indicating that the policy still plans to lean on those who are more informed about cultural heritage issues in a traditional way. Interestingly, objective (f) is “to ensure the participation of youth...”¹⁷⁸ which further singles out which

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, 11.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 11.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, 12.

members of the community are important to NICH when developing and carrying out their policies.

Objective (g) offers insight into how NICH plans to implement its policy. It seeks to use technological advances, specifically mass media, to “contribute effectively to cultural development.”¹⁷⁹ Using mass media as a way to push forward cultural development raises questions over who regulates mass media freedom of the press in Belize. Will the media have the opportunity to report honestly about NICH policy if and when there is controversy about its effects or discontentment within the community? Further, utilizing mass media postulates that there is one brand or type of heritage, NICH heritage, that will be promoted. Can this be done equitably?

Objective (h) exposes what the policies executed by NICH hopes to achieve. The objective is “to ensure that cultural promotions stress the values of national and regional community while locating Belizean culture as part of universal culture...”¹⁸⁰ Ultimately, the goal is a universal culture for Belize, made up of regional community and national community values. This is worry some in its desire to homogenize the culture of a country with so many different stories, perspectives and values laced within its communities. Regional community values are singled out as a component of this greater purée but the selection process for determining what is actually included or what happens when regional cultural values are at odds is not made clear, giving NICH the ability to manipulate this objective to best suit their needs and any political needs of the government.

Objective (i) addresses decolonization, though indirectly. It states, “to so conduct international relations and exchanges as to safeguard and enhance national sovereignty and

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, 12.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 12.

dignity.”¹⁸¹ This objective establishes that Belize wishes to use NICH, its culture protecting and promoting organization, to create a stronger national identity in the international arena. The idea that Belize is an individual country and not just a former colony of Great Britain is important in maintaining and developing a greater reputation of sovereignty. Culture being used as a tool to take on this task demonstrates just how much control will be exerted in developing the universal culture that will ultimately be shared with the world. This makes it less likely that cultural values that may not “enhance national sovereignty and dignity” may be overlooked adding, again, to inequality in how culture is represented. There is a chance that the culture that is not seen as powerful or in promotion of that sovereignty will be overlooked though for certain communities it is highly valued.

The final objective, (j), is “to allow free and democratic access to information within the framework of the law.”¹⁸² This objective suggests transparency for NICH’s work, which will allow communities to hold them accountable for their actions, and give communities the data they need to determine what heritage NICH is promoting, and what heritage is being left behind.

Section 5 is an overview of the functions of NICH.¹⁸³ These include implementing the objectives discussed above, to coordinate and supervise policies and programs, and to “do any other thing” related directly or indirectly with cultural heritage in Belize.¹⁸⁴ Section 6 divides up NICH in to four divisions: the Museum of Belize, the Institute for the Research and Management of Material Cultural, the Institute of Social and Cultural Research and the Institute of Creative Arts.¹⁸⁵ Section 7 establishes a Board of Directors who will direct the affairs of NICH.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸¹ Ibid, 12.

¹⁸² Ibid, 12.

¹⁸³ Ibid, 12.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 12.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 13.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, 13-14.

Section 9 creates a General Assembly. The general assembly has the power to formulate policy which carries out the objectives of NICH, to advise the Board on programs and projects, to monitor programs and projects, and to receive reports from the board.¹⁸⁷

The general assembly is made up of appointed members with two-year terms totaling 46 members.¹⁸⁸ How members are appointed varies. There are two members appointed by each town council in Belize totaling 14 members. There are two members representing each district in Belize totaling 12 members. Six members are appointed by Belize City Council. Two members are appointed by the city of Belmopan. Two members are appointed by the NGO community or other organizations registered with NICH and finally ten members are appointed by the minister responsible for culture and consist of artists, academic, and other persons who “in the Minister’s opinion will contribute effectively to the development and preservation of culture in Belize.”¹⁸⁹ Only 12 members are specifically required to be from a certain region of Belize and thus represent those interests. The remaining members, as long as they are nominated by the groups listed here, do not need to have a specific geographic relationship. This means it would be easy for some regions to be more well represented than others. This is a problem because the assembly makes decisions through voting and if a region has more representatives, it has more votes and thus it is more likely decisions will be made in their favor.

Further, two members of the assembly are nominated by non-government related groups that have taken an interest in Belize. What this implies, exactly, is unclear but the idea that someone who does not even live in Belize has the power to make decisions about their cultural heritage is startling. Finally, ten of the members need to come from a specialized background – as artists,

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, 16.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 15.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 15.

academics or others who will “contribute effectively.”¹⁹⁰ This shows the continued emphasis on the “expert” and that there is a right way to develop heritage.

Part III of the act describes the management structure, duties, and the appointment of staff.¹⁹¹ Part IV explains the financial provisions of the act such as the power to borrow money as well as a requirement of annual reports.¹⁹²

Part V establishes the Museum of Belize.¹⁹³ The museum is a division within NICH whose purpose is for the “collection, preservation and exhibition of objects of scientific, historical or artistic interest.”¹⁹⁴ The museum is the umbrella for smaller local museums located in each district called a “House of Culture” which work to promote Belizean culture.¹⁹⁵ The act lists 14 functions of the museum.¹⁹⁶ Those more directly pertaining to cultural heritage generally as opposed to museum centered functions include (a) where the museum is to develop and promote “respect for the natural and human environment of Belize.”¹⁹⁷ Subsection (d) focuses on collecting, preserving and restoring objects of historical or cultural interest. Subsection (j) seeks the promotion of knowledge and information relating to its purpose and (l) suggests lectures, publications and other means as a way to achieve this.¹⁹⁸ The functions of the museum indicate the desire for it to act as a resource for the perpetuation of those objects deemed “of interest.”

Parts VI, VII, and VIII establish three different divisions within NICH. Part VI establishes “IRMAC” or the Institute for the Research and Management of Material Culture.¹⁹⁹ This large

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 15.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 16-18.

¹⁹² Ibid, 19-21.

¹⁹³ Ibid, 21-24.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 22.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 22.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 22.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, 22.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, 23.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 25-40.

section repeals the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act of 1972 and puts forth some new but mostly borrowed language addressing the administration of ancient monuments and antiquities in Belize. Ancient monuments and antiquities are still defined as in the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act of 1972.²⁰⁰ IRMAC is responsible for the “research on the material culture of Belize” and for the “preservation and management” of the objects, structures and sites assigned to it.²⁰¹

The objectives and functions of IRMAC include an emphasis on collecting and documenting antiquities and objects of material culture, to conduct and license research, and to conduct educational and training programs.²⁰²

Instead of vesting in the crown as in the 1972 document, ancient monuments and antiquities now vest in the state.²⁰³ Ancient monuments and antiquities must be registered with the state and upon discovery must be registered within 15 days.²⁰⁴ Reporting findings, licenses for ancient sites and monuments, power of entry and offences and penalties are also detailed but again are similar to the 1972 act.²⁰⁵ The archaeological reserves process is also reiterated.²⁰⁶ The Minister can declare any area of unalienated land containing or adjacent to an ancient monument as an “Archaeological Reserve.” This is again akin to the 1972 process. Removal of any earth or stone on an Archaeological Reserve is prohibited except under permit issued by the director of IRMAC.²⁰⁷ More general penalties and offences taking place at archaeological reserves are

²⁰⁰ Ibid, 23.

²⁰¹ Ibid, 26.

²⁰² Ibid, 26-27.

²⁰³ Ibid, 27.

²⁰⁴ Ibid, 28.

²⁰⁵ Ibid, 29-34.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 35-36.

²⁰⁷ Ibid, 36.

further outlined.²⁰⁸ Finally, the Minister responsible for tourism can establish rules regarding the management of Archaeological Reserves that have been entrusted to him.²⁰⁹

Section 70 ends Part VI of the act and officially repeals the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act.²¹⁰ Generally, the policies and procedures in the 1972 act are re-established in Part VI and do not indicate a progression in how cultural heritage policy informs the management of such ancient sites and monuments almost thirty years later.

Part VII establishes “ISCR” or the Institute for Social and Cultural Research.²¹¹ This division is responsible for conducting, supervising, collecting, cataloging, and publishing historical, socioeconomic, cultural and anthropological research in Belize.²¹² They are also responsible for training researchers and holding seminars and workshops.²¹³

Languages are specifically identified as an area for research in Belize. ISCR is to establish a “unit for research of languages used in Belize and for language training.” This is exciting because it indicates an acknowledgement of the diverse cultures in the country and that languages other than English are used and worth researching. Further, language is a form of heritage that is not tangible. This, thus, is the first mention of intangible heritage in any of the policy documents related to cultural heritage in Belize. This moment indicates the start of a broadening of the heritage definition for Belize. It also indicates a shift in what is valued in the country because of the resources now being directed towards it through ISCR.

²⁰⁸ Ibid, 36-38.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, 38.

²¹⁰ Ibid, 40.

²¹¹ Ibid, 40-43.

²¹² Ibid, 41.

²¹³ Ibid, 41.

Part VIII establishes “ICA” or the Institute of Creative Arts.²¹⁴ This division of NICH is responsible for the promotion of creative arts in Belize.²¹⁵ ICA branch offices are to be established in every district of Belize.²¹⁶

The ICA list of objectives and functions is extensive. The first is to “encourage the expression, development and preservation of Belizean culture in all its aspects and to stimulate research and study of Belizean culture.”²¹⁷ This objective is exciting in its inclusion of all aspects of Belizean culture. The lack of specificity as to what “all its aspects” entails gives a wide berth to how “Belizean culture” can be defined, encouraging a more inclusive heritage practice in Belize.

This theme of inclusivity continues with objective (f) which is to carry out “artistic or culture-related activity for promoting the development in particular of youth and of women in Belize.”²¹⁸ Focusing on connecting with women and youth, those who tend to not have dominant social positions in society, shows how all-encompassing the policy is striving to be.

Objective (g) iterates a larger principle of ICA “to plan and implement programs and activities for the strengthening, preservation and development of Belizean cultural traditions and identity.”²¹⁹ This shows the link between arts and heritage and how arts development is seen as a way to develop Belizean cultural traditions and identity.

Objective (k) is to encourage the development of cultural and artistic endeavors and activity in all schools in Belize as an integral part of the curriculum.”²²⁰ Again emphasizing the future, youth and that arts is the link to further cultural heritage development.

²¹⁴ Ibid, 43-45.

²¹⁵ Ibid, 43.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 45.

²¹⁷ Ibid, 43.

²¹⁸ Ibid, 44.

²¹⁹ Ibid, 44.

²²⁰ Ibid, 45.

The final section of the Act, Part IX, includes miscellaneous provisions which focus on the transfer of administrative positions and control of property, the enforcement of obligations, protections of the board and regulations in carrying out the act.²²¹

Summary

In summary, this large act establishes the framework for the development and implementation of cultural heritage policy in Belize. Beyond this institutional development an analysis also focused on the metrics of key actors, publics acknowledged, and uses of heritage exposes how far the development of cultural policy has come since the initial 1972 ordinance. From the creation of NICH and its divisions (Museum of Belize, IRMAC, ISCR and ICA) to the repeal of the 1972 Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act, here Belize takes hold of its cultural heritage through this legislation. A General Assembly comprised of appointed members who have the power to create preservation policy encourages participation from all regions of Belize, although not in an equally represented way. The inclusion of language as a research focus for ISCR shows the start of the acknowledgement of intangible heritage which is just as important to preserve as the tangible. Finally, the opportunity for art under ICA to be used as a means to create new heritage, especially by the youth and women, indicates Belize's willingness widen its definition of cultural heritage even further. As such, this act is beginning to set the stage for work that is inclusive, equitable and above all, intellectually decolonized.

D. 2015 National Protected Areas Systems Act

This act repeals the 1981 National Parks System Act.²²² This act allows me to evaluate the following metrics, institutional capacity building, heritage typologies, key actors, definitions, publics acknowledged, and uses of heritage. First, it also establishes types and management

²²¹ Ibid, 45-48.

²²² See Appendix F for the full text of the 2015 National Protected Areas System Act.

structures for protected natural areas in Belize through the establishment of a National Protected Areas System.²²³ It creates a Minister who will work to safeguard Belize's natural heritage, enhance national pride for Belize's natural heritage and "have regard" for Belize's commitments to international conventions.²²⁴ The act creates 13 distinct protected areas including national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary 1 and 2, natural monument, forest reserve, marine reserve, archaeological reserve, and protected landscape, increasing the types of natural heritage a prospective site can fall into.²²⁵

A National Protected Areas Advisory Council is created to advise the minister on management of the protected areas, Belize's international and regional obligations, and other needs.²²⁶ The council includes representatives from the largest NGOs, the University of Belize, and the National Security Council.²²⁷ These wide range of key actors exposes an increase in the number of stakeholders involved in the advisement process, creating a more inclusive field.

In addition to repealing the 1981 National Parks System Act, the 2015 National Protected Areas Systems Act gives jurisdiction to NICH as outlined in the National Institute of Culture and History Act, to manage archaeological reserves, ancient monuments and or antiquities.²²⁸ This is a deviation from the 1981 National Parks System Act where this distinction was not explicitly made.²²⁹ As such, natural heritage falling within the 2015 act is managed separately from heritage categorized as archaeological reserves, ancient monuments or antiquities. As such, only in specific instances will the 2015 National Protected Areas Systems Act apply to archaeological

²²³ Belize National Protected Areas System Act, 2015, Act No. 17, 424.

²²⁴ Ibid, 426-427.

²²⁵ Ibid, 427-428.

²²⁶ Ibid, 428-429.

²²⁷ Ibid, 430-431.

²²⁸ See Appendix F for the full text of the 2015 National Protected Areas System Act.

²²⁹ See Appendix C for the full text of the Belize Park Systems Act, Chapter 215, 1982.

reserves, ancient monuments or antiquities.²³⁰ Those instances are likely to occur when managing an overlap between archaeological reserves and nature-based protected areas as indicated in objective (f) of the act which states “promote the strengthening of coordination and collaboration between nature-based protected areas, and archaeological reserves, where deemed necessary.”²³¹

What is meant by “coordination and collaboration” is more clearly explained where the Act explains what to do when “biological corridors” and archaeological reserves (or areas under the mandate of NICH) overlap.²³² Subsection 25 of Part IV explains that the Advisory Council created under the act is to advise and request approval from the Minister of Culture (in charge of NICH) and the Minister in charge of this Act on “effective ways to ensure the strengthening of coordination and collaborating between relevant management entities...”²³³ The Advisory Council will also provide guidance on implementing the agreed upon “coordination and collaboration” plan, as well as monitor and assess its effectiveness.²³⁴

Summary

To summarize, as established through the applicable metrics, the policy functions to expand the definition of natural heritage and thus the natural heritage typologies available for sites to be categorized into. The act also increases the number of key actors involved in the management process. Further, the act makes the institutional decision that except in specific instances, this act seeks to keep the management of natural heritage separate from the management of archaeological reserves, ancient monuments or antiquities. This separation indicates that natural

²³⁰ National Protected Areas System Act, 2015, Act No. 17, 424.

²³¹ Ibid, 425.

²³² Ibid, 438-439.

²³³ Ibid, 439.

²³⁴ Ibid, 438-439.

heritage serves a different purpose in the eyes of the Belizean government and perhaps, is seen as a less effective tool for achieving the larger goals decided by NICH than other forms of cultural heritage. However, this is a larger question and would require further research to definitely answer. Though it does achieve a sweeping revamping of the cultural heritage system as undertaken in the 2000 National Institute of Culture and History Act, it makes an effort to increase representation for natural heritage sites, making space for new stories to be told, and ultimately functioning to decenter the dominant historical narrative.

E. 2017 National Cultural Heritage Preservation Act

Finally, in 2017, Belize passed a comprehensive National Cultural Heritage Preservation Act.²³⁵ Further building on the 2000 act, this act allows me to evaluate the following metrics: heritage typologies, definitions, key actors, publics acknowledged, uses of heritage and institutional capacity building. On an institutional level, this act codifies the organizations, procedures and definitions necessary to manage cultural heritage at the national level. Generally, it outlines the functions of the National Institute of Culture and History (NICH) in relation to cultural heritage, establishes a National Heritage Advisory Council, establishes a National Heritage Fund, outlines a National heritage Protection Plan, the process of designation and deaccession of heritage assets, establishes a National Heritage Asset Register, and explains nominations and procedures for registration as managing repairs, acquisitions.

The act begins with the assent by the Governor-General affirming its enactment followed by definitions of key terms used in the act. Here, cultural property is defined as “moveable or immoveable property forming part of the heritage assets.”²³⁶ Heritage assets are defined in three ways. First, as “moveable or immoveable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of

²³⁵ See Appendix G for the full text of the 2017 National Cultural Heritage Act.

²³⁶ Belize National Cultural Heritage Preservation Act, 2017, Act No. 40 of 2017, 370.

every people.”²³⁷ Examples given include monuments of architecture, archaeological sites, works of art, as well as important collections of books or archives.²³⁸ Additionally, heritage assets also include the buildings whose function is to house and preserve heritage assets such as museums and libraries.²³⁹ Finally, heritage assets are also defined as cemeteries, objects and structures of national interest and significance as well as information and data related to it.²⁴⁰ The definition for “designation” offers some insight into the larger goals of the act by explaining the reasoning for designation “...to ensure that they are protected, to allow them to be passed on to future generations.”²⁴¹ The definition for “heritage places” also offers insight to the bigger picture by describing how buildings, monuments, sites etc. can become a heritage place, including when they are “closely connected to events of major historical importance which have contributed to national memory or to national historical identity.”²⁴² The focus on a *national* memory or a *national* historical identity shows how promoting a national unity is prioritized and cultural heritage is seen as a way to further promote this.

Another definition of note is the definition of “integrated conservation.”²⁴³ This definition describes what is considered conservation and again sheds insight into some of the greater goals of the act. By seeking out the “integration of cultural heritage within the physical environment of present-day society and by assigning a social function to such cultural heritage compatible with its dignity and its setting” the act indicates that the goal is not just put its heritage objects in a museum or turn them into one, it seeks to adaptively reuse them in a way that serves a purpose

²³⁷ Ibid, 370.

²³⁸ Ibid, 370.

²³⁹ Ibid, 370.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, 370.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 370.

²⁴² Ibid, 371.

²⁴³ Ibid, 371.

for society and to accomplish this in a way that respects the integrity of the heritage by doing it with dignity.²⁴⁴

A final definition of note is the term “safeguard” and its relationship with intangible heritage. Safeguard means “...measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage...as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.”²⁴⁵ The idea of revitalizing intangible heritage is interesting and poses the question of how one can authentically revive what has been lost.

Part II of the act describes the functions and responsibilities of the National Institute of Culture. First, they are responsible for administering the act.²⁴⁶ This includes promoting and encouraging the “designation, protection, preservation, promotion and maintenance of heritage assets for the benefit and enjoyment of the present and future generations of the people of Belize...”²⁴⁷ Further, NICH will work toward the protection of heritage assets and to make sure that future changes do not result in the loss of their significance.²⁴⁸ Part II then lists all of the responsibilities NICH has from recommending designations of heritage assets to the actual work of preserving them, encouraging research, erecting tablets to mark assets and managing educational efforts, accessibility of sites and their operation.²⁴⁹ Additionally, community participation is emphasized as a goal in maintaining and transmitting cultural heritage.²⁵⁰ Another important role dictated to NICH is to establish, update, manage and publish an inventory of heritage assets.²⁵¹

²⁴⁴ Ibid, 372.

²⁴⁵ Ibid, 372.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, 373.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, 373.

²⁴⁸ Ibid, 373.

²⁴⁹ Ibid, 373-376.

²⁵⁰ Ibid, 375.

²⁵¹ Ibid, 376.

Part III creates a National Heritage Advisory Council to help NICH execute their functions in relation to this act.²⁵² It describes the composition of the council members, and gives the council power to establish the rules necessary to establish procedures and govern the operations of the organization.²⁵³ The specific functions of the council include assisting NICH with all aspects of their responsibilities and the power to create committees to assist.²⁵⁴ Luckily, Part IV focuses on funding for the act.

Part V gives NICH the authority to prepare a National Heritage Protection Plan. This plan will outline a national strategy for cultural heritage in Belize.²⁵⁵ It will work to identify priorities by connecting with a variety of stakeholders – from local communities to qualified experts and will especially identify what heritage assets are in danger of being lost and take on actions to prevent such loss.²⁵⁶ Creating records or lists is stated as a means of working towards this goal. Interestingly, “assisting communities in protecting their heritage assets when changes are being planned” is one of the plan requirements showing a fear of loss as communities develop and change.²⁵⁷

Part VI requires NICH to develop categories for historic asset designation in addition to submitting a list of historic assets.²⁵⁸ Further, Part VI establishes that an asset falls within the scope of the act irrespective of age so long as the assets is of “...value that is worth preserving.”²⁵⁹ Not establishing a minimum age for a historic site will allow for more contemporary historical sites to be declared a historic asset increasing the ability of Belize to

²⁵² Ibid, 377.

²⁵³ Ibid, 379.

²⁵⁴ Ibid, 382.

²⁵⁵ Ibid, 385.

²⁵⁶ Ibid, 385.

²⁵⁷ Ibid, 386.

²⁵⁸ Ibid, 387.

²⁵⁹ Ibid, 388.

preserve the recent past. This is especially crucial for a country that has only been independent since 1981, allowing for heritage created right after independence, which ultimately should be history valuable to all Belizeans, and thus allowing for tangible symbols of this period to be preserved before they are destroyed. Further, Part VI lists off instances where a historic asset can be removed from the register. These instances include when an asset is damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster with the cost of repair outweighing the assets value, when the asset is in a state of disrepair such that conservation and maintenance outweigh the value of the property, when a duplicate is acquired that is in better condition, and where a major urban development outweighs the conservation of a property.²⁶⁰

Part VII establishes a National Heritage Asset Register. It gives responsibility to NICH to develop and manage the register (along with all other lists) and must make them available for public scrutiny during business hours.²⁶¹ Elements required in describing assets include: descriptive details, the status of the asset and any other detail deemed relevant.²⁶² Heritage assets should be categorized as heritage places or heritage objects.²⁶³ Additionally, designations may be appealed.²⁶⁴

Part VIII explains the nominations and procedures for registration.²⁶⁵ Persons and corporate bodies can nominate via a writing shared with the council, who will assess the merit of the nomination and then recommend it to NICH for approval who will then recommend it to the minister who grants final approval.²⁶⁶ If NICH recommends a nomination to the minister NICH

²⁶⁰ Ibid, 389.

²⁶¹ Ibid, 391.

²⁶² Ibid, 391.

²⁶³ Ibid, 391.

²⁶⁴ Ibid, 392.

²⁶⁵ Ibid, 392.

²⁶⁶ Ibid, 393.

is required to notify the owner of the asset as well as the nominator.²⁶⁷ Further, the notification will include a brief statement of the cultural heritage significance of the place or the object.²⁶⁸

Part IX describes interim protection orders and instances in which they are applicable – whenever it “is necessary or desirable to do so for the purposes of this Act.”²⁶⁹ The goal is to pause whatever is happening to give time to make decisions on the best way to preserve the place or object. Part X describes when notices for repair are to be served on owners when buildings are neglected and at risk of serious harm.²⁷⁰ Part XI describes the acquisition and compensation process for land by Belize.²⁷¹ Part XII describes financial aspects of the act including borrowing money.²⁷²

Part XIII titled “General” is a bit of a catchall section. It describes administrative requirements such as annual reports, an index of heritage assets, the process for alterations to heritage assets, inspection of sites by NICH, and penalties for intentional damage or destruction of heritage assets.²⁷³ Interestingly, it also describes a “guardianship” contract.²⁷⁴ This contract allows the custody and administration of government owned heritage assets to be transferred to another local or related entity as well as a foreign organization. Allowing a foreign organization to take on custody and administration of a heritage asset is a bit concerning because they would have the power to administer as they see fit, perhaps providing interpretations or encouraging values that are not directly in line with a Belizean focused story, especially a decolonized one.

²⁶⁷ Ibid, 395.

²⁶⁸ Ibid, 395.

²⁶⁹ Ibid, 397.

²⁷⁰ Ibid, 401.

²⁷¹ Ibid, 401.

²⁷² Ibid, 404-405.

²⁷³ Ibid, 405-410.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, 406.

The final two sections are called schedules. The First Schedule comprises of the Rules of Council which explains the procedures for meetings.²⁷⁵ The Second Schedule explains the criteria for designation.²⁷⁶ Section one describes criteria for heritage assets generally. This is simply a list of categories in which the historic asset could fall under. There is no hierarchy because one category does not appear to be valued over another. Additionally, the list of categories is expansive. This includes everything from “historicity” to “artistic excellence,” to “scientific attributes” to “indigenous to Belize.”²⁷⁷ Further, the option to argue for “any other relevant consideration” as a valid category to meet criteria makes the criteria for designation flexible and open to categories not listed. Section two describes criteria to be considered specifically for buildings.²⁷⁸ This list of categories is a bit narrower and includes individual architectural merit, historical associations, and association with well-known characters or events.²⁷⁹ Again, there is no hierarchy of categories but there is not an “other” category as described in section two. Thus, Belize generates an enforceable framework for its cultural heritage.

Summary

In summary, the 2017 Belize National Cultural Heritage Act functions to establish the organizations, procedures and definitions necessary to manage cultural heritage at the national level as identified by analyzing the act through the established metrics. Further, the act reflects changes to how cultural heritage is established, such as when designation of a site can occur based on its connection to “events of Major historical importance.” A physical or age-based

²⁷⁵ Ibid, 411.

²⁷⁶ Ibid, 412.

²⁷⁷ Ibid, 412.

²⁷⁸ Ibid, 412.

²⁷⁹ Ibid, 412.

attributed is no longer the only way to achieve this form of protection. This is a huge move away from the 1972 ordinance, even the 2000 Act! So many more stories can be told when the criteria for what is saved is expanded beyond what is traditionally valued in the Western, European based heritage. Further, this act exposes the desire to integrate cultural heritage within the physical environment and to give it a social function and purpose, encouraging an adaptive use for heritage. Community participation is emphasized and the goal of using culture to establish a national memory or national historic identity is explicitly stated. This act thus functions as a means of decentering the heritage narrative by creating a more inclusive heritage space – from expanding heritage’s definition and typology to increasing actor participation to working to more equitably disperse administrative functions. As such, this decentering driven by inclusion embraces the ideals of intellectual decolonization – when a peoples’ thoughts, ideas and values are detangled from those of the colonizer and are free from the colonizer’s influence – and establishes the cultural policy of Belize as undergoing the process of intellectually decolonizing.

Conclusion

Overall, when tracing the development of cultural heritage policy in Belize, an analysis led by the metrics of heritage typologies, definitions, key actors, publics acknowledged, uses of heritage and institutional capacity building indicate how over time Belize’s laws increase their capacities to decenter the dominant historical narratives in favor of lesser told voices – ultimately providing strong evidence that the cultural policy of Belize is in the process of intellectually decolonizing.

This is evident in the increasing level of inclusivity when managing and defining heritage. From the 1972 Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Ordinance where the focus is solely on objects and sites to the start of the acknowledgement of intangible heritage in 2000 to the

desire to use heritage in a way that gives it a social function and purpose in the 2017 there is a definite trend towards a more comprehensive understanding of heritage.

Further, inclusivity is further evident when comparing the definitions of the acts over the years. The definitions for cultural heritage transition from ancient monuments and antiquities strictly defined by age in 1972 to a more inclusive definition as explored in 2017 where there is no age requirement. Further, the policy has moved towards incorporating the community in the heritage management process and dispersing administration through NICH to all parts of the country in efforts to decentralize how heritage policy is managed and enforced. This is a far cry from 1972 when only experts were referenced.

The 1981 Park Systems Act welcomes natural heritage into the fold but in 2015 management of natural heritage is separated from the management of ancient monuments or antiquities by NICH. This decision means that natural heritage in Belize can be managed outside of the goals and objectives of NICH perhaps indicating that natural heritage is not viewed as powerful a tool as manmade heritage when striving to create a national cultural heritage. Alternatively, this separation also can be seen as a way for Belize to choose how to manage their heritage on their own terms. Separating these two systems gives the government power to more efficiently govern these types of heritage in ways best suited to their purposes. The government is willing to clarify the heritage system's structure without needing to still ascribe to an older way of managing heritage. The confidence to experiment exemplifies a power shift and further supports the decolonizing trend in the policy being generated.

Further, simple shifts in language, from ownership of heritage by “the crown” to “the state” and in finally removing age as a precursor to designating heritage evidence how far the

policy has come from the 1972 Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Ordinance in beginning to leave behind Western values of heritage and being the process of developing their own.

Overall, policies have shifted over time towards a greater inclusion of histories, working with a more diverse range of stakeholders within the community and in developing an institutional system for managing heritage - all attributing to an intellectually decolonized cultural heritage policy. However, as shown in the narrative analysis of two colonial sites that follows, an intellectually decolonized policy does not necessarily dictate a decentering of the narratives that already dominant a site's history, suggesting that there is still more aggressive policy actions to take.

Chapter 4: Colonial Heritage Case Studies Analyzed

An in depth look at the narratives presented at two colonial sites in Belize City, Belize presents the opportunity to understand the extent to which the heritage shared through these narratives is undertaken in an intellectually decolonized way. It also provides the opportunity to see how the changes in cultural heritage policy are reflected in or have influenced, at all, the content and structure of the narratives and if this too is reflective of an intellectually decolonized approach to heritage making. These individual site narratives contribute to the larger heritage story in Belize and thus will provide a basis for understanding how culture, policy and decolonization play out in the wider Belizean heritage realm.

The two colonial sites reviewed are: St. John's Cathedral and the Government House turned House of Culture. These sites were all built under the dominance of Great Britain and were selected for this analysis for the following reasons:

First, selecting sites built within the range of Great Britain's dominance supports the idea that when the sites were built there was a dominant and a subaltern group. Focusing on sites built by the dominant group while under this peak colonial rule allows for a clear narrative to analyze: a story of the colonizer and colonized should thus be present to tell the full, equitable story of the site and therefore be reflective of an intellectually decolonized approach to heritage.

Further, the 2016 National Cultural Policy, generated by National Institute of Culture and History (NICH), addresses the need to preserve historic sites in section 12.1.2.3. Though the 2016 policy is not binding, the 2017 National Cultural Heritage Preservation Act gives NICH the power to execute the 2016 National Cultural Policy. Section 12.1.2.3 specifically discusses colonial sites as coming under threat of destruction because of development pressures. The proposed "policy interventions" offered in the 2016 Cultural Policy to mitigate this threat

emphasizes the need for documentation and registration of such sites as well as their conservation and promotion in a "manner that retains their colonial characteristics for the purpose of identity building, education and sustainable cultural tourism."²⁸⁰

It is important to note, however that these sites are not officially designated, as far as this researcher was able to tell. However, the government has certainly established that they are important heritage sites through the time and money NICH has spent preserving and promoting them and their support is why the public-facing narratives analyzed in this section exist. Further, NICH's involvement in the preservation of the sites, despite the lack of official designation, makes these sites ripe for connecting to NICH policy and Belize's cultural policies at large.

Other colonial sites exist in Belize. These two were selected over others because they met the following criteria which was established to get the most out of an assessment of a site when actual travel was not possible due to COVID-19: they were built in the colonial era, not completely destroyed in any of the hurricanes of the 20th century so some of the original material remains, are accessible to the public, are considered key sites to visit for tourists as well as Belizeans, had "official" narratives (narratives produced by the government or the site themselves) which offer the opportunity to link narratives directly to the execution of cultural policy, and that such narratives were easy to access for the curious tourist, Belizean or researcher.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge limitations in the analysis due to my own personal biases. I am a white female that was educated in western styles of thought and thinking in a western country that propagates itself as a world power. Therefore, my interpretations of the narratives presented at the sites are not perfect and are shaped by my own background. I strive to

²⁸⁰ Belize National Cultural Policy 2016-2026, *National Institute of Culture and History*. 2016. 13

be critical in analyzing the sites and sources but by no means place any blame on any stakeholder. The shift towards an intellectually decolonized heritage is ongoing and understanding where a country's heritage is at will help determine steps for continual change.

I. Methodology for Analysis of Site Narratives

The narratives presented at the two sites were analyzed in two parts. First, extensive attention is paid to how the narrative is presented on its face— the plain words and images presented to the audience. Then, the plain words or images are assessed through a narrative analysis allowing for an in-depth breakdown of the presented narrative to understand its purposes and effects.

Understanding how the narrative is presented on its face supports the overall understanding of how a site perceives itself and what it believes it can contribute to the larger cultural heritage story of Belize through its telling. The following questions acted as starting points to understand the narrative: whose heritages were being represented, what was considered important about the heritage (i.e. the site or events or the people associated with it), is there an obvious link to the promotion of a national identity, and if there is any evidence of 2016 National Cultural Policy's influence on the narrative.

Examples of the types of narrative platforms explored include videos and iPhone/iPad applications or apps. Additionally, these are public-facing narratives generated by the site or an organization involved in managing the site. Ultimately, this combined analysis provides evidence for assessing the intellectual decolonization of the cultural heritage narrative at colonial sites in Belize. The result of the analysis can then be reflected back to the policy that has influenced it, establishing that narratives can be used as one factor in determining the progress of the intellectual decolonization of Belize's cultural policy.

II. Analysis of Case Studies

A historical introduction of each site provides the background needed to analyze the narrative presented by the site. The sites will first be introduced and then analyzed. An overarching conclusion ends the chapter.

St. John's Cathedral – Historical Introduction

Built at the request of the early government of British Honduras with costs subjugated to its citizens, the foundation stone of St. John's Cathedral was laid on July 20, 1812.²⁸¹ The first Anglican church in Central America, St. John's is located at the southern end of Belize City.²⁸² First a parish church it became a cathedral in 1891.²⁸³ The original site was swampy in nature and served as barracks for the developing town.²⁸⁴ The trajectory leading to a building had started almost 40 years earlier with the arrival of the first Anglican chaplain in 1776.²⁸⁵ The chaplain, Reverend Robert Shaw, was sponsored by the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel in London.²⁸⁶ This missionary group still functions today under the name United Society Partners in the Gospel and continues to support work in Belize.²⁸⁷ Though the cathedral is owned and operated by the Anglican Diocese, Bishop Phillip Wright believes that the Anglicans are “merely the custodians of this historic and iconic building.”²⁸⁸

²⁸¹ D. Gareth Lewis, *The History of St. John's Cathedral, Belize*, (Belize: St. John's Cathedral Committee, 1976) 2.

²⁸² *The History of St. John's Cathedral*, St. John's Anglican Church, Belize City, 2015.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0taO3-MIpHE>.

²⁸³ “British Honduras,” *Kings College London*, accessed January 12, 2021

<https://kingscollections.org/exhibitions/specialcollections/latin-america/british-emigration/honduras-society>.

²⁸⁴ Archibald Robertson Gibbs, *British Honduras: An Historical and Descriptive Account of the Colony from its Settlement, 1679*, (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1883) 77; and John C. Everitt, “The Growth and Development of Belize City,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 18, no. 1 (1986): 89.

²⁸⁵ Lewis, *The History of St. John's Cathedral, Belize*, 2.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 2.

²⁸⁷ “Belize,” *USPG*, accessed January 20, 2021. <https://www.uspg.org.uk/worldwide/global-relationships/global-relationships-8853.php>.

²⁸⁸ *Restoration Works on 200 Year Old St. John's Cathedral Church*. Channel 5 Belize, Belize City, 2018 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvp2NaPw3iI>.

The shape of the cathedral is that of a traditional Western church based on the Christian cross and sits on a mahogany floating foundation where original growth wooden logs sit “crisscrossed” and support the building.²⁸⁹ The façade material consists of bricks which were imported from Britain as ballasts.²⁹⁰ There is a slight dispute to the origin of the bricks as a brick expert believes they are too unique to be ballasts and must have been ordered.²⁹¹ There is not enough research to support or refute this claim. The labor for the structure was carried out by slaves.²⁹² Oral traditions in the area describe slaves “backing the bricks” from the Court House Wharf to the site of St. John’s.²⁹³ Shackles of the enslaved can still be made out in some of the bricks.²⁹⁴ Unsurprisingly, given the importance of the logging industry to Belize, wood is another primary construction material.²⁹⁵ The roof is made of sapodilla (a type of evergreen tree) imported from the United States.²⁹⁶ Beams and pillars are constructed out of mahogany cut in the Belizean jungle.²⁹⁷ Inside, wood is reflected in the mahogany alter-table as well as the original pews.²⁹⁸ Original stained glass was installed in 1814 but was destroyed by a hurricane in 1931.²⁹⁹ The Dioceses of Jamaica gifted the current stained glass in 1931.³⁰⁰

²⁸⁹ *The History of St. John’s Cathedral*, St. John’s Anglican Church, Belize City, 2015.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0taO3-MIpHE> and *Restoration Works on 200 Year Old St. John’s Cathedral Church*. Channel 5 Belize, Belize City, 2018 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvp2NaPw3iI>.

²⁹⁰ Lewis, *The History of St. John’s Cathedral, Belize*, 7.

²⁹¹ *Restoration Works on 200 Year Old St. John’s Cathedral Church*. Channel 5 Belize, Belize City, 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvp2NaPw3iI>.

²⁹² “St. John’s Cathedral, Belize City,” Facebook, Accessed March 1, 2021

<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnscathedralbelize>.

²⁹³ Byron Foster, *The Baymen’s Legacy: a portrait of Belize City* (Benque Viejo del Carmen: Cubola Productions, 1987) 30.

²⁹⁴ John C. Everitt, “The Growth and Development of Belize City,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 18, no. 1 (1986): 89.

²⁹⁵ Lewis, *The History of St. John’s Cathedral, Belize*, 13.

²⁹⁶ *The History of St. John’s Cathedral*, St. John’s Anglican Church, Belize City, 2015.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0taO3-MIpHE>.

²⁹⁷ Foster, *The Baymen’s Legacy: a portrait of Belize City*, 30.

²⁹⁸ Lewis, *The History of St. John’s Cathedral, Belize*, 13; and 2 Cents Cam: *St. John’s Cathedral Belize Oral History*, Institute for Social and Cultural Research (NICH), Belize City, 2017.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eG6YyI5PXeA>.

²⁹⁹ Lewis, *The History of St. John’s Cathedral, Belize*, 17.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 17.

The church bell, added in 1826, was designed by T. Mears of London and coincided with the official consecration of the church.³⁰¹ A series of brass chandeliers were added in 1826.³⁰² Unfortunately, only one remains after the hurricane of 1931.³⁰³ The cathedra, or chair where a bishop of the church sits, was also added in 1826.³⁰⁴ Finally, a wooden seat designed for the Governor's use only was also added in 1826. Today, only the Governor General is allowed to sit there.³⁰⁵

Additional historic objects in the interior reflect gifts from the greater Anglican church and its patrons in Belize and around the world. A silver baptismal basin was gifted by Mary Armstrong in 1825.³⁰⁶ Silver chalices still in use for services today were gifted in 1815 by Superintendent Colonel George Arthur and by General Bruce Michell in 1862.³⁰⁷ A brass Eagle Lectern was gifted to the church in 1890.³⁰⁸

An early description of the church was recorded in the diary of John H. Caddy, a first lieutenant in the Royal Artillery serving as the Harbor Master of Belize.³⁰⁹ In 1939 he describes it as "...a brick structure of neat appearance, having a tower and a spire; the interior is

³⁰¹ Lewis, *The History of St. John's Cathedral, Belize*, 20; and John A. Burdon, *Archives of British Honduras* (London: Sifton Praed and Co., 1934) 2:291.

³⁰² *The History of St. John's Cathedral*, St. John's Anglican Church, Belize City, 2015.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0taO3-MIpHE>.

³⁰³ Lewis, *The History of St. John's Cathedral, Belize*, 17.

³⁰⁴ *The History of St. John's Cathedral*, St. John's Anglican Church, Belize City, 2015.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0taO3-MIpHE>.

³⁰⁵ *Restoration Works on 200 Year Old St. John's Cathedral Church*. Channel 5 Belize, Belize City, 2018
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvp2NaPw3iI>.

³⁰⁶ Lewis, *The History of St. John's Cathedral, Belize*, 14.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 14.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 17.

³⁰⁹ David M. Pendergast, *Palenque the Walker-Caddy Expedition to the ancient Maya city, 1839-1840* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967) 9.

handsomely fitted up, and contains an excellent organ.”³¹⁰ In 1862 the spire, made of wood, was removed.³¹¹ In 1926 an additional story to the tower was added.³¹²

Beyond traditional church services, supplementary functions were carried out in the church. Indigenous Kings from the Mosquito Coast of Nicaragua were crowned in the Cathedral in 1815, 1825 and 1845.³¹³ As such, St. John’s Cathedral remains the only Anglican cathedral outside of Westminster Abby where Kings have been crowned.³¹⁴ It is notable that some of the lesser chiefs that were present at coronations had their children baptized at that time as well.³¹⁵ The church also served a record holder for the enslaved population in Belize from 1794 to 1817.³¹⁶ Baptisms are recorded for the enslaved as well as “freeborns.”³¹⁷ In 1838, a thanksgiving service was held, celebrating the emancipation of the enslaved.³¹⁸

Since inception, the church has withstood many hurricanes that seasonally arrive in Belize City. The 1931 and 1961 hurricanes did the greatest amount of damage to the church. The 1931 hurricane damaged the original stained glass and brass chandeliers. In 1961, the original wooden floor was badly damaged and ripped out.³¹⁹ The constant cycle of hurricanes in the region have encouraged concrete as a material to be used in preserving more fragile structures. Damage, though lesser in nature, still occurs with the arrival of more contemporary hurricanes.

³¹⁰ David M. Pendergast, *Palenque the Walker-Caddy Expedition to the ancient Maya city, 1839-1840* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967) 21.

³¹¹ Lewis, *The History of St. John’s Cathedral, Belize*, 6.

³¹² Foster, *The Baymen’s Legacy: a portrait of Belize City*, 30.

³¹³ Lewis, *The History of St. John’s Cathedral, Belize*, 12.

³¹⁴ *The History of St. John’s Cathedral*, St. John’s Anglican Church, Belize City, 2015.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0taO3-MIpHE>.

³¹⁵ Foster, *The Baymen’s Legacy: a portrait of Belize City*, 30.

³¹⁶ Lewis, *The History of St. John’s Cathedral, Belize*, 7.

³¹⁷ *Ibid*, 7.

³¹⁸ Foster, *The Baymen’s Legacy: a portrait of Belize City*, 30.

³¹⁹ *Restoration Works on 200 Year Old St. John’s Cathedral Church*. Channel 5 Belize, Belize City, 2018
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvp2NaPw3iI>.

When Hurricane Richard struck in 2010 mud coated the floor and pews.³²⁰ Luckily, mud can be power washed off and the local community is there to volunteer.³²¹ In addition to natural disasters, the church has experienced break-ins as well as an attempt at arson in 2002.³²² In 2018, the St. John's Cathedral Restoration Committee for Technical and Financial Assistance sought funding for restoration and stabilization efforts of the building.³²³ Crumbling brickwork, rotting wooden windows and support beams, deteriorating glass, and a roof badly in need of repair all were cited as issue in support of such a request.³²⁴ Funding was agreed upon and granted through the Belize City House of Culture and the Downtown Rejuvenation Project supported by the Government of Belize and the Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund.³²⁵ In addition, the church held fundraisers such as a dinner-dance and received further funding from the local community.³²⁶

Besides improving the aesthetic and structural aspects of the church, the plans to restore sought to increase the site's popularity with tourists as well as increase cultural awareness for Belizeans.³²⁷ Restoration work was completed on the church in 2019. Improvements to the doors and windows, repointing of bricks, and a general cleaning of the building were all achieved.³²⁸ Today, the church functions as a site of national importance, a tourist site and place of worship for the local community. The church hosted Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip on their tour of

³²⁰ "Landmarks also damaged by Richard," *News 5*, last updated October 27, 2010 <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/41508>.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² "Historic St. John's Cathedral Ransacked," *News 5*, last updated June 12, 2006 <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/9164>.

³²³ "200-year-old St. John's Cathedral Church undergoes renovations," *Breaking Belize News*, Last updated July 20, 2018 <https://www.breakingbelizenews.com/2018/07/20/200-year-old-st-johns-cathedral-church-undergoes-renovations/>.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ *The Restoration of St. John's Cathedral*. Channel 5 Belize, Belize City, 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUv9wUiimEs>.

³²⁷ Ibid.

³²⁸ Ibid.

Belize in 1994.³²⁹ For tourists, there are docents on-site that direct tourists and pass out materials on the work and function of the church.³³⁰ The church hopes to streamline and increase this process in coming years with an emphasis on the fact that no one is currently charged for any type of tour.³³¹ They do, however, run a gift shop.³³² During the COVID-19 Pandemic the church continues to serve the community virtually through livestream services and also offers morning and noonday prayers.³³³ Ultimately, the site is associated with colonialism because it was built by the colonizers and functions as a symbol of their cultural dominance.³³⁴

St. John's Cathedral Narrative Analysis

Analyzing the narrative presented at the site is accomplished through the review of two videos and two iPad apps. This evidence was selected due to its easy accessibility for any Belizean or visitor who has access to the internet making these narratives especially important for Belize in that they share a certain kind of perception of Belizean heritage with the world. Further, each item of evidence was officially generated for St. John's Cathedral either through NICH or, in the case of the first video, the Anglican Church of Belize. The videos and applications are first described as they appear on their face and then their imagery and language are analyzed through a discourse analysis as described in the methodology above.

³²⁹ *Did you know that there are approximately 700 historic sites in Downtown Belize City?* Channel 5 Belize, Belize City, 2018 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O64yArWrlrI>.

³³⁰ *Restoration Works on 200 Year Old St. John's Cathedral Church.* Channel 5 Belize, Belize City, 2018 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvp2NaPw3iI>.

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² "Ground Broken on Cathedral Gift Shop," *News 5*, published February 3, 2003 <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/15727>.

³³³ "St. John's Cathedral," *Facebook*. Accessed February 26, 2021 <https://www.facebook.com/stjohnscathedralbelize>.

³³⁴ *From The Heart of Belize - St John's Cathedral*, Belize Channel, Belize City, 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydvH3yFGtxg>.

Two videos have been generated on St. John's Cathedral that present an official narrative of the site. The first, *The History of St. John's Cathedral*, was created by the church in 2015.³³⁵ The video presents a short introduction to the church's history as well as its importance. The second, *St. John's Cathedral, Belize Oral History*, was created by the Institute for Social and Cultural Research (ISCR) under the National Institute of Culture and History (NICH) in 2018.³³⁶ This video features short interview bites with local Belizeans at the church asking them about the church's history.

Two iPad/iPhone applications have been generated on Belize City, each with a feature on St. John's Cathedral. Both were created by the Government of Belize in collaboration with the International Cooperation and Development Fund (Taiwan ICDF) starting in 2014.³³⁷ The *Belize City Tour for iPhone* was first released in January 2019 and the *Belize City Eco Museum* was released in October of 2020.³³⁸ The videos and then the applications will each be analyzed in turn.

Video I: *The History of St. John's Cathedral*

First, to describe the video as presented on its face. In *The History of St. John's Cathedral*, the church is the main subject. The pacing of the video is fast with a duration of three minutes and 45 seconds. Shots of the exterior and interior shuffle by as a narrator describes the history of the church and its importance in English. The total word count of the video is 454

³³⁵ *The History of St. John's Cathedral*, St. John's Anglican Church, Belize City, 2015.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0taO3-MIpHE>.

³³⁶ *2 Cents Cam: St. John's Cathedral Belize Oral History*, Institute for Social and Cultural Research (NICH), Belize City, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eG6YyI5PXeA>,

³³⁷ "Belize City Tour for iPhone," Apple App Store. Accessed February 6, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/bz/app/belize-city-tour-for-iphone/id1451025438>; and "Belize City Eco Museum," Apple App Store. Accessed February 1, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/om/app/belize-city-eco-museum/id1534924018>.

³³⁸ "Belize City Tour for iPhone," Apple App Store. Accessed February 6, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/bz/app/belize-city-tour-for-iphone/id1451025438>; and "Belize City Eco Museum," Apple App Store. Accessed February 1, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/om/app/belize-city-eco-museum/id1534924018>.

words with a Flesch-Kincaid grade reading level of 11.8. An atmospheric lyric-less music plays in the background invoking feelings of prominence and importance. Shots focus on aerial views of the church's exterior, wide angle shots of the interior as well as closeups of objects, plaques, furniture, and other decorative details. All legible signage is in English. There are no subtitles. The only added text starts around the one minute thirty second mark where objects are named and years they were acquired are listed in a white, easy to read font: St. John's Bell, 1826; The Brass Eagle Lectern, 1890; Cathedra Top, 1826; Brass Candelabra, 1826; The Governor General's Seat, 1826; and lastly the Silver Baptismal Basin, 1823. People are not present in the video until the last 30 seconds when the video cuts to casually clothed citizens who are shown sitting during a church service and then shown standing in line to receive a blessing. The total time people occupy the screen is approximately six seconds (2:52 to 2:58) and are thus only on screen for 2% of the video. The overall quality of production is high. The video is in high resolution, coloring is consistent throughout and sound mixing and cutting do not draw attention away from the flow of the video. The video ends with on screen text in a legible font in off grey stating in English "Thank you for visiting St. John's Cathedral serving Belize since 1812."³³⁹

Next, to analyze the language and imagery of the video to understand who the audience is. First, the intended audience of the video is the tourist, not the local. This is evident by the text at the end of the video that thanks the viewer for "visiting St. John's Cathedral." The statement thus outright defines the audience— the visitor. It is also evident at 2:28 of the video, the visitor is again pointed out as the intended audience with the line "Before you go."³⁴⁰ Further, the language choice used for the narration of the video and all text present in the video is English.

³³⁹ See Appendix H for transcript of the video. *The History of St. John's Cathedral*, St. John's Anglican Church, Belize City, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0taO3-MIpHE>.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

English is the official language of Belize and spoken by 62.9% of the population.³⁴¹ However, Spanish is spoken by 56.6% of the population.³⁴² Therefore, only using one language excludes other audiences. Besides Spanish, languages such as Creole, Maya or Garifuna are spoken in Belize. Thus, an even larger portion of Belizean's would be able to understand the video and be included in the audience if a second language were used. Subtitles in Spanish or one of the other languages spoken in Belize would further increase the reach and opportunity for all to be included as an audience.

Further, English indicates an assumption about the viewer and visitor – that they speak this language and thus excludes those who do not. This assumption is warranted in a way because of the 62.9% of Belizeans who speak the language and English is the official language of the country. However, 37.9% of the population cannot speak English and by only using one language this groups is excluded from the narrative. Further, Belize is located in Central America, a predominantly Spanish speaking region. By using English, the video appeals more overtly to their English-speaking Caribbean connections rather than to Mexico and Guatemala, their Spanish speaking neighbors. This suggests a desire to remain connected to an audience that they are linked through historically via colonialism.

Other assumptions about the audience are evident in the narrative threaded throughout the video. First, they assume no prior understanding of Belizean history. Facts are presented as a baseline level of understanding. For example, the narration from 0:23-0:31 states, “In an era of British and Spanish colonial conflict St. John’s served as a notable symbol of their homeland to the British settlers.” The next line shifts away from this topic to describing the memorial tablets

³⁴¹ “Belize,” *CIA World Factbook*, Last updated February 25, 2021 <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/belize/#people-and-society>.

³⁴² Ibid.

that are placed on the church walls (starting at 0:32). To offer more detail, Great Britain and Spain both claimed Belize as their own resulting in the battle of St. George's Cay where Great Britain beat Spain for dominance of Belize.³⁴³ Great Britain did not officially recognize Belize as a colony until 1862.³⁴⁴ Thus, this instance exemplifies how much of the narration is skimming the surface rather than taking a deep dive or picking sides. This approach thus assumes no prior knowledge of Belizean history, perhaps indicating that the ideal appreciator of the heritage of the church is a certain kind of visitor and not the local who would be looking for more information beyond the baseline.

This idea is further played out in the narrative when you look at the types of heritage that are emphasized as special and important. First, there is a focus on the British heritage of the site. This is evident in the text of the narrative which references Great Britain directly and alludes to a relationship with Great Britain in more indirect statements. Great Britain is directly referenced at 0:23-0:31 of the video where the narrative states, "...St. John's served as a notable symbol of their homeland to the British settlers." Referencing the British settlers continues at 0:32 with "Memorial tablets to these early Englishmen and their families line the cathedral walls..." Here, the British are seen as the important peoples associated with the early history of the site and not local Belizeans. This makes sense given that the church was built for Anglican worshipers, the official religion of Great Britain. However, this emphasis and direct references highlights the church's direct association with Great Britain and thus exudes it as heritage of the upmost importance.

The focus on British heritage as important in a more indirect way can be found at 0:48 of the video with "Specialty bricks and a master brick layer arrived via ships from London." Again,

³⁴³ Stephen Caiger, *British Honduras, Past and Present* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1951) 97-99.

³⁴⁴ Renate J. Mayr, *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 161.

at 1:50 with “The coronations of the kings of the Mosquito Coast nation in what is now Nicaragua were performed here in the 1800’s. Making St. John’s the only Anglican cathedral outside Westminster Abbey where the crowning of kings has taken place.” When unpacked, two colonial endeavors are highlighted here as important historic events. First, the importation of architectural styles and materials from the colonizing country with the “specialty brick” and even a “master brick layer” are brought in to build the church – implying the inferiority of local materials and skill sets. Further, the crowing of kings at the site is underscored. Kings are not merely a British phenomenon, but linking the crowning to Westminster Abbey, where the crowning of British Kings and Queens has happened for almost 1000 years, again suggests that it is not the crowning of kings that is historically important but the relationship shared because of this act between St. John’s cathedral in Belize and Westminster Abbey in London.³⁴⁵ In both instances this alludes to the pride in the church’s association with imperial practices. As such, the narrative emphasizes the importance of the colonial history of the site. It is important to acknowledge this history but the emphasis of this part of the history over the more recent history and even post-colonial history further suggests a colonial focus and begs the question as to why this is seen as more important? Hurricanes have damaged the site and it has been part of celebration routes for political celebrations. None of these events that any less important in the history of the church but is not those but the events relating to the British story which are.

Arguably, all of this is alluded to, but only very generally, in the final fourth of the video. Starting at 2:28 with “Before you go we hope you will take a moment to imagine the accomplished individuals who have sat where you are seated and the many special occasions marking significant moments of the history of the community and nation. The numerous

³⁴⁵ “Coronations,” *Westminster Abbey*, accessed March 5, 2021 <https://www.westminster-abbey.org/about-the-abbey/history/royalty/coronations>.

weddings, funerals, baptisms, and other ceremonies that have taken place in this house of worship over the last 200 years.” All of these historic events stated above could fit within this generalization but when the time was taken to isolate specifics on events associated with Great Britain it is important to question why history unrelated to the British is generalized at the end of the video and suggests that in this instance a colonized version of cultural heritage is being presented.

It is important to note that slavery is mentioned in the text of the narrative hinting at some decolonized aspects of the narrative. Slavery is first mentioned at 1:22 of the video with “Slaves performed the construction of St. John’s.” There is no overt indication that it was the British that brought slavery with them in their colonial domination but it is assumed that the listener will connect the dots, this was a British church and slaves were building it for the British in Belize. Then, however, the text cuts right to the emancipation of slaves with “After the emancipation free slaves worshiped, baptized their children, and were married in the cathedral.” There is no reference to their struggle, nor, further emphasis on the connection between slavery and the colonizer. Instead, the focus is on how the church was a place for former slaves to carry out social rituals associated with the Anglican religion and not religion they may have practiced before being forced into slavery. Finally, the concept of slavery is further brushed aside with its final mention at 1:33 of the video “August of 1838 marked another political milestone. The service of thanksgiving for the emancipation of the slaves was held in St. John’s by rector Dr. Matthew Newport. Dr. Newport is buried on the north side of the cathedral.” Again, the focus is on the freed slaves and how the church was part of the ceremony of their freed life. Interestingly, the only figure presented individually in the video is the rector who gave the service of thanksgiving for the emancipation of slavery. Dr. Matthew Newport was the rector of the church

from 1824-1860 and thus witnessed Belize under slavery and how the nation changed with its abolishment.³⁴⁶ This figure is important in the history of the church but perhaps by highlighting him in the video his role as a link between the British history and Belizean history is made, acknowledging the ills of slavery so many are still connected to in Belize as well as to the British of whom Belize is still a member of their commonwealth. Thus, this history of slavery is important, but it has been presented in a way that skims on its harms and focuses on Britain and Belize working together to move past it. This coddling of the idea can thus be seen as working to preserve the reputation of the colonizer and thus is not a decolonized version of heritage.

In addition to the text, the narrative offers visuals of the site and objects present at the site. This focus dominates the video and the local community is only presented at the start of the final thirty seconds of the video (at 2:52) and occupies the screen for approximately six seconds (from 2:52 to 2:58). This ratio suggests a westernized set of values being used to identify what is historically important at the site and thus what should be portrayed in the narrative.³⁴⁷ It is not the people and their stories that makes the site worthy of a visit for the tourist but the historic architecture and the chance to see some of the important objects held at the site. Many of the objects highlighted serve a religious purpose, such as a silver baptismal basin (at 2:19) and the brass eagle lectern (at 1:33) and when viewed through a religious lens, as implied in a video produced by a church, they are arguably not overtly linked to colonialism because they are important for the church as religious objects used in ceremony. However, objects do present a colonial link in that they are directly associated with the Anglican religion, the religion of the colonizer. A sense of the duality of the functions of these objects is clearer when focusing on the brass bell (at 1:29). The brass serves a religious purpose (starting mass) and in that respect can be

³⁴⁶ D. Gareth Lewis, *The History of St. John's Cathedral, Belize*, (Belize: St. John's Cathedral Committee, 1976) 8.

³⁴⁷ Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, (New York: Routledge, 2006) 3.

construed as a religious artifact. The bell also, however, is used to show a direct link to Great Britain. The bell was made in London as indicated in the visible raised lettering along the edge of the bell "...of London." The video did not need to linger over this angle (at 1:30) and thus further emphasize the overt colonial relationship between the church in Belize and the skilled craftsmen in London.

Other very distinct colonial connections derived from focusing on objects within the church include the cathedra top which is the canopy atop the coronation chair (at 1:57) as well as the Governor General's Chair where only the Governor of Belize and now only the Governor General can sit (at 2:18). The objects are related to colonial undertakings such as the importance of a king and social stratification, bolstering the importance of the historic colonial connection already evident in the text and ultimately supporting an adherence to westernized notions of what is considered important when deriving historic and cultural values.

Finally, the narrative suggests that it is important not just as an isolated site but for its role in the greater development of Belize. This is overtly stated within the narrative text. First, at 1:50 the video states "Over the centuries St. John's continued to play a key part of the changing politics of the region" and then goes on to describing the crowing of the Mosquito Coast kings at the church. By positioning the church in the role of a connector of different worlds – the Anglican crown and the indigenous crown – St. John's makes its claim for an importance beyond its brick walls by playing "a key part." Further, at 2:13 the video states "Many original items remain in the church today paired with improvements, repairs and construction from across the centuries. They are part of the history of St. John's Cathedral and of Belize as a nation." This is stated as the historic objects of the church associated with rituals both religious and colonial

flash on screen. Again, the church makes a claim for its greater importance but here as a guardian of the historic fabric that connects a colonial past to the Belizean present.

Through this emphasis of the greater importance of St. John's Cathedral the narrative works at achieving a final goal – developing a sense of pride for the church's role in Belize's history and thus creating the feeling a visitor should develop not just for the church but for the nation itself. Nation building is of key importance in the country, especially at this juncture with the 2016 cultural heritage policy in effect. Though this video was produced before the generation of this policy it is still an accessible, official video on the history of the church and the story it tells is thus influential in the type of nation being built by Belize.

Summary

To summarize the narrative presented through *The History of St. John's Cathedral* is not quite decolonized as evident in the narrative's portrayal of the history and function of the church. The video is aimed at the visitor to the church and not the local Belizean. The video is produced in English, merely skims the surface on the church's history and focuses on its British heritage connection. This is done through the attention paid to objects and events that link the church to its colonial past. This colonial past is more often glorified than reckoned with generating a positive, colonial centric narrative. Enslavement, a result of colonialism, is merely mentioned and the history of the church in the postcolonial area is merely swept into general statements about its more recent past. Ultimately, there is pride in the narrative's connection to colonialism and the site seeks to develop it through this official video.

Video II: *St. John's Cathedral, Belize Oral History*

First, to describe the second video as presented on its face. In *St. John's Cathedral, Belize Oral History*, the church is the main subject. The pacing of the video is dictated by the answers

given by interviewees to the question posed by an anonymous interviewer: “Two cents question today my sister (or brother) what is one historical truth you know about St. John’s Cathedral?”³⁴⁸ Shots of the exterior including wide and aerial shots as well as shots of the interior of the church swap places with a shot of the interviewee framed from the shoulders up. A photo of the church in black and white (presumably historic) is shown at the start of the video and again at the end. The interviewees drive the subject matter of the video as the interviewer only poses the initial question and thanks each interviewee at the end with “Thanks for Two Cents.”³⁴⁹ There is no specific length of time that interviewees speak. The shortest answer is about ten seconds long at 4:08. The longest is two minutes and fifty-three seconds long starting at 1:55. A total of nine (presumed) Belizeans are interviewed. Two men and seven women. All appear to be average Belizean citizens except for the second male who wears a priest’s collar (see video at 1:55). The total word count of the video is 683 words. The Flesch-Kincaid grade reading level is 8.5. An upbeat repetitive song plays in the background with drums at the start, end and plays quietly in the background during the short interviews. Shots of the interior of the cathedral reveal signage in English. The interviewer asks questions in English and interviewees respond in English as well. There are no subtitles. Onscreen text is presented at the start, introducing the producers of the program “KREM Television in association with,” along with “the Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project” and ends with “Presents Oral History.” There is onscreen text at the end of the program as well. The final frames show a title card with “2 Cents Cam Oral History.”

³⁴⁸ See Appendix I for a full transcript of the program. *2 Cents Cam: St. John’s Cathedral Belize Oral History*, Institute for Social and Cultural Research (NICH), Belize City, 2017.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eG6YyI5PXeA>.

³⁴⁹ See Appendix I for a full transcript of the program. *2 Cents Cam: St. John’s Cathedral Belize Oral History*, Institute for Social and Cultural Research (NICH), Belize City, 2017.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eG6YyI5PXeA>.

In addition, throughout the program a boarder lines the bottom of the frame and displays the logos of all of the sponsors and other relevant parties involved in the House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project. This includes Historic Belize City, Taiwan ICDF, NICH, and Belize City. The coat of arms of Belize is also included amongst the logos. The overall production of the video is fine. Shots of the interior and exterior of the cathedral are sometimes repeated. Resolution varies depending on where the interview is taking place. Sound cuts at times are somewhat choppy and begin before the next subject appears on the screen but do not distract from understanding the question or answer.

Next, to analyze the language and imagery of the video to understand who the audience is and the type of narrative being presented. First, the intended audience of the video is the local. This is evident in the style of the production. There is no atmospheric music, production value is adequate but not polished indicating that there is no need to impress. The language used by the interviewer is casual. Subjects are described as sister or brother by the interviewer depending on their gender – a friendly and familiar way to address someone. There are no probing questions beyond the initial ask of what they know about St. John’s cathedral and each interviewee is thanked when they are finished speaking. Further, the responses given by the interviewees at times talk about tourists (see video at 4:18) thus indicating that they are not a member of this group. Additionally, the historic nature of the cathedral is mentioned as a reason for why tourists may wish to visit (see video at 4:18) further indicating that the video is for a localized audience. The use of English indicates an assumption about the audience: that English is the most accessible of the languages of Belize. This is problematic, as discussed, in that not all Belizeans speak English and thus that a minority are excluded from the programing based on this choice. Other assumptions being made about the audience are that they are already familiar with St.

John's cathedral. There is no introduction to the site nor review at the end. The interviewer jumps right into questioning with no clarifications or follow-ups.

The answers given by the interviewees show what facts about St. John's Cathedral are considered important in the eyes of Belizeans. Dates associated with key developments in the church are mentioned by all interviewees. In 1812, the cornerstone of the church was laid down (see video at 0:38, 1:55, 4:08 and 4:18). This was repeated by four interviewees. 1812 is also mentioned as the date that the church was built (see video at 1:15 and 1:55) by two interviewees. In 1826, the church was consecrated. This was mentioned twice (see video at 1:41 and 1:55). The dates of the most damaging hurricane in 1931 (see video at 1:55), the church's 200-year anniversary (see video at 0:47) and dates certain rectors were active at the church (see video at 1:03 and 1:15) are also mentioned. All of these dates are focused on the church itself. There is no overt mention of the British or connection to a colonial relationship. This is even evident in all of the interviews but especially in the longest answer given by an interviewee (see video from 1:55 to 4:08). The interviewee describes some of the historic artifacts of the church, such as the brass chandeliers, but without the colonial implications found in the first video. The longest interviewee also takes this opportunity to remind that the church was built by slaves (see video at 1:55) and that the slaves could not worship in the church that they had built – eliciting a negative outcome of the building of the church and through it can be extrapolated a negative view of colonial power. Only the last interviewee recites facts about the church that promulgate the link to colonialism in a positive way. At 4:18 a woman states that the church is the “oldest church, Episcopal church, in Central America.” Further, she states “You know there were the coronations of kings there as well.”

Interestingly, the more recent history of the church that is overlooked in the first video is mentioned. The 1931 hurricane is referenced (see video at 1:55) as is the church's 200th anniversary celebration in 2012 (see video at 0:47). One interviewee even includes her own wedding date as a truth known about St. John's cathedral (see video at 0:47). Thus, this video, especially when compared to the first video, is produced in a way that values the decolonized story of history in Belize by focusing on its local citizens who are seen as the keepers of its history. The history shared by the local citizens also exude a decolonization of heritage in their lack of glorification of the colonial past and at times in their calling out what was wrong about like in the case of the slaves who built the church being unable to worship in it.

The focus on colonial heritage in this video aligns with one of the policies laid out in the 2016 Cultural Policy of Belize. Though it is not explicitly clear if the video was produced to carry out any of the specific policy interventions laid out in section 12.1.2.3 *Historic Sites and Landmarks* the video was produced in part by NICH, the creator of the policy, as well as the Government of Belize indicating a strong likelihood that they were aware of the policy when generating the video.³⁵⁰ Further, the narrative presented hits on two different policy interventions described in section 12.1.2.3. First, the "Government of Belize shall...Facilitate the mobilization from multilateral agencies and local the [sic] corporate community of the financial resources required for the preservation, management and promotion of historic sites and landmarks." Here, the mobilization of multilateral agencies and the local corporate community is indicated by the boarder that lines the bottom of the frame of the video displaying the logos of Historic Belize

³⁵⁰ For the specific policy at issue see: National Institute of Culture and History, *Belize National Cultural Policy 2016-2026*, (Belmopan: 2016) 13-14, <https://www.dgft.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Copy-of-National-Cultural-Policy-Final-Policy-Document-1.pdf>.

City, Taiwan ICDF, NICH, Belize City and the Belizean coat of arms. These groups are presumedly working together for the promotion of the historic site of St. John's Cathedral. Second, the "Government of Belize shall...Ensure the identification, research, documentation and registration of all colonial sites and landmarks and their conservation and promotion in a manner that retains their colonial characteristics for the purpose of identity building, education and sustainable cultural tourism." Here, *promotion in a manner that retains their colonial characteristics for the purpose of identity building*, and *education* are especially present. The colonial site, St. John's Cathedral, is promoted through the creation of this video. The colonial characteristics of the site are retained by the video's focus on the site's history which is rooted in the colonial era. The focus on history shows how the purpose of education is present in the narrative. The format of the video shows how the purpose of identity building is present in the narrative. There is no expert with a superior understanding of the church's history showing a "right" or "better" set of answers. By only asking Belizeans about what truths they know about the church a shared sense of value for local history is created for the viewer of the video and those participating promoting the idea that all Belizeans seem to know something about St. John's Cathedral. This thus generates a unity amongst Belizeans with this shared set of values which is necessary for creating a shared identity. Thus, these two policy interventions indicate evidence of the influence of the 2016 Cultural Policy of Belize.

Finally, there is no obvious link to the promotion of a national cultural heritage beyond that the producer of the series is NICH. The nature of the video is unscripted so there is no agenda that the video appears to be striving towards. It does not appear that the goals of the program are to truly educate or inform. However, in its own way, the style of the video shows the community's collective knowledge on the subject of St. John's Cathedral and highlights a

collective understanding that the people see this church as important. This promotes a unity among viewers and a sense of pride for their heritage which aligns with the NICH goals of developing a national identity through heritage in Belize. The overall manner in which this is done thus strives for a decolonization of cultural heritage.

Summary

In summary, the video *St. John's Cathedral, Belize Oral History* is created for the local Belizean audience. The type of narrative being presented focuses on the communal aspect of heritage, that people in Belize know historic truths about St. John's Cathedral. The narrative is not trying to teach or impose a set of beliefs. In fact, it organically generates a sense of unity in its focus on the history known by the regular, non-expert community. The historic facts shared focus on the Church's role in Belize and not Belize's connections to Great Britain its former colonizer. This is thus highly suggestive of a decolonized approach to cultural heritage. Further, though not explicitly stated, the video generated exudes characteristics in line with the policy interventions proposed in the 2016 National Cultural Policy, indicating that the policy's characteristics lean in favor of promoting a heritage that is intellectually decolonized.

iPad/iPhone Application 1: *Belize City Tour for iPhone*

First, to describe the application as presented on its face moving first to a description of the app generally to give context for the St. John's cathedral section of the app. Then, to a specific look at the St. John's Cathedral section of the app. Once downloaded the app opens and plays a calm but upbeat guitar led jingle with gentle "oohing" voices in the background and an electronic infused xylophone rhythm that loops infinitely while the app is open. The initial screen centers around a logo of Belize city in shades of orange and black.³⁵¹ A few of the key

³⁵¹ See Appendix J for stills of each page of the application; "Belize City Tour for iPhone," *Apple App Store*. Accessed February 6, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/bz/app/belize-city-tour-for-iphone/id1451025438>;

historic buildings in Belize are featured in the logo including St. John's cathedral. The orange logo sits in contrast to a purple backdrop. The words "City Tour" are connected to the logo along its top. "Belize City Tour" is stated along the screen's bottom. The next screen features the official crest of Belize atop the red and blue of its flag but the men in the crest are drawn in a cartoonish fashion. The option to skip the introduction is found at the end of the screen. If you stay with the introduction a window pops atop the crest and asks "How's your first impression to this hub of the country?" Then, the overlapping window dissolves and a new window appears stating "If you haven't got a chance to visit the city, please follow our guidance to explore the historic Downtown – Belize City!" From there, the screen changes to a map of downtown Belize City drawn in the same style as the crest. Twelve sites of interest are featured on the map. Clicking on a site causes the cartoon men from the crest, who have followed the viewer to this page, to mosey on over to that site. At the bottom of the screen three icons sit in an off-white bar that states "Map", "Project", and "About Us". Clicking on "Map" keeps you on the current screen with a map of downtown Belize City on it or takes you back to it if you click on it while on a different screen. Clicking on "Project" brings up a new screen where a window with text in white overlays a historic image. A title which fades into the historic image states "Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project."³⁵² The text in the window introduces the app user to Belize City stating that it was the "...capital of Belize during the English colonial era." It describes the kinds of structures ("colonial-style old houses") one might find on a visit. It also describes the history and culture of the city as "having been forgotten." It goes on to introduce the creators of the app, the Government of Belize and Taiwan ICDF and how they have been working together since 2014 on turning downtown Belize City into an "eco-museum"

³⁵² See Appendix J page 7.

which is where several historic sites and one core site are connected to each other and branded together under the umbrella of a larger heritage program.³⁵³ When clicking the arrows on the screen a new window appears with more white text. This window explains the mission of creating an eco-museum in downtown Belize City as well as welcome the app user to the town. An introduction video is also linked which shows footage of the sites drawn on the map and offers more insight into the Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project.³⁵⁴ When clicking the arrow again another window appears and gives a more thorough explanation of an eco-museum.³⁵⁵ A final arrow click takes the user to the last screen where the eco-museum explanation concludes and the Government House is indicated as a potential core museum site for the eco-museum with other historic sites functioning as the satellites.³⁵⁶ When clicking on the “About Us” icon at the bottom of the screen a window explaining the Taiwan ICDF and their role in the project emerges. Scrolling to the end the Belize City Tour app is directly addressed and its purpose is described as follows “The project aims to promote awareness and appreciation of colonial heritage and cultural identity through the rejuvenation of a pilot selection of historical/colonial buildings, creating an eco-museum that will contribute to the development of sustainable cultural tourism.”³⁵⁷

Next, the section of the app focused on St. John’s Cathedral will be described on its face. When clicking back to the map and on the church icon a picture of the church is displayed.³⁵⁸ A user can scroll through five different photos of the church exterior. Clicking on the “play” arrow opens a window with two headings “Story” and “Information.” Clicking on “Story” gives a brief

³⁵³ “About Us,” *Belize City Eco Museum*, accessed February 2, 2021 <https://belizecityecomuseum.com/about/>.

³⁵⁴ See Appendix J page 8. Introduction video is accessible here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05dlrr3obIE>.

³⁵⁵ Ibid, 9.

³⁵⁶ Ibid, 10.

³⁵⁷ Ibid, 14.

³⁵⁸ Ibid, 15.

overview of the history of the site.³⁵⁹ Clicking on the “Information” field gives local contact information, open hours as well a map linked to google maps giving the user the chance to route themselves to the site.

Here, it is very clear that the intended audience for the application is a tourist. From the opening “Welcome to Belize City” window to questions like “How’s your first impression to this hub of the country?” It is clear the intended user is one from out of town. The app even goes to great lengths to allow a user to easily seek out the real site by providing links to google maps. The app is playful, using cartoon drawings in place of realistic images of buildings or the official Belizean seal. Even St. John’s Cathedral is drawn in a cartoonish fashion. As in the previously analyzed narratives, the use of only English indicates that there are expectations for the type of visitor who will be engaging with the app and a certain type of tourist (mainly western and English speaking) is targeted. There are no translation settings or subtitles. This is especially interesting given the bicultural cooperation (Taiwan and Belize) involved in developing the app and their longstanding partnership (starting in 2014) in regards to the downtown development program.

The form and imagery surrounding the St. John’s Cathedral portion of the app indicates what about the site’s history is important: the building itself. The four photos of the church exclusively feature different angles of the exterior and three of the four photos are re-used in the story section of the app. People are treated as an afterthought given that they are not in any of the images relating to the church. It is true that cartoons of the two men featured on the Belize seal “guide” you around the map and hover over the site you have clicked on and thus hover over the church. However, they are they only human figures associated with St. John’s Cathedral and they

³⁵⁹ Ibid, 16.

serve more of a function in the app's narrative rather than highlighting an aspect of the human side of Belizean history. Throughout the app this is the case. The historic photos featured in the background of the "Project" description of the app have some human forms but they are obscured by the text. A picture of two figures involved in the partnership between Belize and Taiwan is shown under the "About Us" section but their roles and even names are not shared. The narrative's text further exposes what aspects of history at St. John's Cathedral are of value and thus seen as important. In the "Story" portion of the St. John's Cathedral section the brief history first highlights that the church is "the oldest surviving building of Belize's colonial period." Here, it is clear that the building itself is important but the link to Belize's colonial era is what makes it important with the addition of "colonial period." This also promulgates a positive link between the church and Belize's colonial past. The enslavement involved in building the church is mentioned but very briefly "The church was built by slaves..." and then the paragraph immediately goes on to describe the bricks and interior materials and furnishings. There is no acknowledgement that enslavement is a product of this colonial culture, perhaps this is an assumed fact, which hints at a narrative that is entwined with positive colonial values and thus is not a decolonized narrative.

The materials used to build and furnish the church are also expressed as important within the narrative's text. Here, the narrative states that the church was built "from bricks brought to Belize as ballasts in the hulls of ships sailing from Europe" thus emphasizing the historic value of the church's building material. The "intricate stained-glass windows, ornate mahogany pews and an antique organ" inside the church are also described signifying their importance. Materiality is again shown as important in the final section of the text which mentions the 2018 restoration work done on the church.

In addition to sharing what is important about the history of the church, the narrative also indicates which stakeholders were the most important when developing the app and the history that it promotes. In the text within the St. John's section when the restoration is described it is also expressed that it was completed in collaboration between Taiwan ICDF and the Belizean Ministry of Tourism and then links this achievement to the eco-museum that the app will ideally act in support of. Taiwan ICDF is again indicated as an important stakeholder under the "Project" section of the app. Taiwan ICDF is described as "working in collaboration" with the Government of Belize on the task of "developing the Downtown of Belize City into a rich eco-museum" singling them out as key players in this initiative.

Finally, the "About Us" section is primarily dedicated to explaining the mission of Taiwan ICDF. There are no sections on the Belizean government or the specific ministries that focused their attention on this project and the greater eco-museum project. Clearly, they are a, if not the, key stakeholder in the project. It is unclear how much control was given to Taiwan ICDF in the development of not just the app but the greater Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project that the app grew out of. This is important to consider because the goals of the project, "to promote awareness and appreciation of colonial heritage and cultural identity." This begs the question, what kind of harm to a cultural identity results when colonial heritage is explored from the eyes of the colonizer only? Slavery is almost offhandedly mentioned. Ties to colonialism are seen as generators of historic worth. It's not that the colonial past should be ignored in any way, it's that the colonial story should be told from many angles so that a fuller story is shared and a more inclusive culture is ultimately developed. Further, when an application is designed for the tourist what they learn about what is considered important in Belize shapes the outside perception of Belize cultural identity. Thus, choosing what is important or telling all

of the sides of the story is crucial in development of an equitable cultural heritage especially when an explicit goal of a project is to promote awareness of and appreciation for a peoples' cultural identity.

The focus on colonial heritage in the app aligns with one of the policies laid out in the 2016 Cultural Policy of Belize. The app was published in 2019 and created in collaboration with the Belizean government so it is very likely, though not overtly mentioned, that the policy had influence on the way in which the project was executed. Section 12.1.2.3 *Historic Sites and Landmarks* of the policy focuses on preserving colonial heritage, expressly its architecture, as it has “come under threat of destruction due to development pressures.”³⁶⁰ Here, the app specifically promotes the colonial character of downtown Belize through its almost exclusive focus on sites related to Belize’s colonial past, in line with the goal of section 12.1.2.3. The app also acknowledges the threat of destruction in its “Project” section where it reads “The city is like a treasure trove of Belizean history and culture that has long been forgotten.” Thus, policy influence seems quite likely or in the very least conveniently coincidental.

Further, the app supports the progress of the first policy intervention under 12.1.2.3. The policy intervention strives to “...*Ensure the identification, research, documentation and registration of all colonial sites and landmarks and their conservation and promotion in a manner that retains their colonial characteristics for the purpose of identity building, education and sustainable cultural tourism.*” The app fulfills the desire to identify, research and document colonial sites in Belize given the work done to compile a list of colonial sites in Belize City, identify their location and summarize their histories. Further, the hope for creating an eco-

³⁶⁰ National Institute of Culture and History, *Belize National Cultural Policy 2016-2026*, (Belmopan: 2016) 13-14, <https://www.dgft.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Copy-of-National-Cultural-Policy-Final-Policy-Document-1.pdf>.

museum amongst the sites collected in the app fulfills the purpose of education and perhaps even sustainable cultural tourism. The idea of an eco-museum, advanced through the app, seeks to keep objects in their current contexts, thus creating a more sustainable museum environment.³⁶¹ The desire to work towards identity building is even expressed in the “About Us” section.³⁶² Therefore, if it is assumed that the app was created under the influence of the 2016 Policy it is clear that the policy can be interpreted in a way that promotes heritage that aligns most closely with the colonial ideal and thus does not always promote a decolonized cultural heritage. If different perspectives were offered or the stories of the people of Belize, like in the “Two Cents” video were there to express the counterpoint to the glory of colonial rule the narrative presented would be less one sided and more decolonized.

Summary

In summary, the *Belize City Tour for iPhone* is designed for the tourist and expressed in English only. The types of narratives presented focus on the colonial heritage of downtown Belize City and include St. John’s Cathedral. The treatment of the church in this instance is supports a positive link to its colonial history with very minimal discussion regarding the negative aspects of colonial rule. The architecture, materiality and furnishings of the Church are emphasized in the text indicating their importance. Further, imagery only focuses on the exterior of the church as no human images are presented. More generally, the app expresses which stakeholders were important in its creation through its overt references to the government of Belize as well as Taiwan ICDF. This is problematic as it is unclear how much power was given to Taiwan in the development of the app. Further, when the goal of the app and the larger eco-museum project is “to promote awareness and appreciation of colonial heritage and cultural

³⁶¹ See Appendix J page 9.

³⁶² See Appendix J page 14.

identity” more transparency on how the role of colonial heritage is cast is important to ensure whose heritage is being valued and molded into the Belizean Cultural Identity. Finally, elements of the 2016 Policy are evident in the application as a whole, suggesting that the policy can be used to generate a narrative that promotes colonial values only, and thus is not decolonized.

iPad/iPhone Application 2: *Belize City Eco Museum*

First, to describe the *Belize City Eco Museum* app as presented on its face to provide context for the St. John’s Cathedral portion of the app. After downloading, the app opens up to a stark white backdrop with an orange logo featuring three historic Belize buildings (including St. John’s Cathedral).³⁶³ They are nestled inside of a rectangle framed by the words “Belize City” and “Eco Museum” which is animated and appears as if typed out. The screen automatically shifts to a new frame where the logo appears on a blue backdrop and two dark blue bars appear at the bottom of the frame with the text “Tour the Ecomuseum” and “See how the App Works.” The latter is a tutorial for the site explaining how the app is connected to google maps such that you can be immediately directed to the real time location of the historic site.³⁶⁴ This section also includes an “About the Project” which gives an overview of Belize City, its economic downturn after the 1970’s and how the Downtown Belize Rejuvenation project will help with issues like economic stagnation and urban depression by preserving and revitalizing colonial-style public architecture and private homes.³⁶⁵

³⁶³ See Appendix K for stills of each page of the application; “Belize City Eco Museum,” *Apple App Store*. Accessed February 28, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/belize-city-eco-museum/id1534924018>.

³⁶⁴ See Appendix K page 11.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 12.

When clicking on “Tour the Ecomuseum” a new page appears with options to “Visit Sites,” “View the Tutorial,” “About the Ecomuseum,” “About the Taiwan ICDF” and “Visit Website” – which takes the user to the Eco museum website when clicked on.³⁶⁶

Clicking on “Visit Sites” takes you to a map with assorted stars spread about the Belize City Center. Clicking on each star reveals the name of the historic site it is associated with.³⁶⁷ With clicking on the star associated with St. John’s Cathedral a photo of the church shows up.³⁶⁸ Clickable options include “Story” or “Map/Info.” Clicking on story reveals a rotating slideshow of three pictures of the church, two of the exterior and one of the interior.³⁶⁹ Four key facts are bulleted at the bottom: “Built in 1812, Consecrated in 1826, Oldest Historic Building Belize, Site for the Crowning of three Mosquito Kings.” Clicking on the “Map/Info” takes the user to a google map of the site with a button in orange titled “How to Reach Location” which when clicked routes the user from its current location to the site.³⁷⁰

Clicking on the house icon at the bottom of the screen returns the user to the home screen. From there, when clicking on “About the Ecomuseum” a new frame opens where an orange title “About the Eco Museum” sits atop a paragraph of black text that describes the funders of the app (Government of Belize and Taiwan ICDF) and its goal “to provide a visitor to downtown the opportunity to take an interactive self-guided walking tour of our newly established Ecomuseum.”³⁷¹

Returning to the main screen again and clicking on “About the Taiwan ICDF” opens up to a long paragraph that explains what Taiwan ICDF is and its involvement in the development

³⁶⁶ Ibid, 2. Website linked is available here: <https://belizecityecomuseum.com>.

³⁶⁷ Ibid, 3.

³⁶⁸ Ibid, 5.

³⁶⁹ Ibid, 6.

³⁷⁰ Ibid, 7.

³⁷¹ Ibid, 9.

of the app. It also describes the goal of the larger Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project “to promote awareness and appreciation of colonial heritage and cultural identity through the rejuvenation of a pilot selection of historical/colonial buildings, creating an eco-museum that will contribute to the development of sustainable cultural tourism.”³⁷² Finally, clicking on icon of two overlapping circles at the bottom of the screen reveals a two-paragraph screen where an enthusiastic paragraph describes why the user will enjoy its eco-museum experience. It also lists out the executors of the eco-museum project: the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation, the National Institute of Culture and History and the Belize City Council. It also indicates that the eco-museum project is valued at 15.1 million BZD.³⁷³

Next, to analyze the language and imagery of the app. As an app whose function is to guide a visitor around the city’s historic sites it’s clear that the app is intended for the tourist and not the local. The fact that it is a phone application also indicates the type of visitor they are looking for – one who is able to afford a cell phone with an internet connection so that the app can be used on site. Of the 405,633 people who live in Belize only about 256,479 have cell phones.³⁷⁴ Therefore, almost half of the local population would not be able to use the app as intended. Additionally, the app is presented only in English with no options for translation. This also associates the intended audience with a connection to the English-speaking Western world and shows an intentional exclusion for those who do not speak the language.

The narrative presented in the app is direct and emphasizes the basic facts about historic sites. When specifically looking at Belize only three photos and four bullet points of information are divulged. Two of the three photos are of the exterior of the church and one of is of the

³⁷² Ibid, 10.

³⁷³ Ibid, 8.

³⁷⁴ “Belize,” *CIA World Factbook*, Last updated February 25, 2021 <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/belize/#people-and-society>.

interior. One of the exterior shots includes two human figures walking away from the church. However, it is clear that the architecture of the site is what is most valued and important. The four bullet points identify four facts about the church: 1. Built in 1812, 2. Consecrated in 1826, 3. Oldest Historic Building Belize and 4. Site for the Crowning of three Mosquito Kings.³⁷⁵ The last bullet point links the site to an important role that it played in the city's colonial past: as a site where coronations took place for kings. This is thus a positive link to colonialism because it is used as reasoning for why this site is important especially when considering that of the four bullet points included about the site the creators of the app decided to focus on one which allows for a user to consider the colonial past in a positive light. Why wasn't the fact that the church was built by slaves included? This is a short sentence and could easily replace the statement on the crowing of the Mosquito Kings. This addition would have offered a more decolonized approach to representing the history of the site because it would offer a full story of the church by mentioning the negative consequences of colonialism. Thus, this narrative does not appear to present a decolonized heritage.

This application was released in 2020. As such, the 2016 Cultural Policy of Belize would have had the opportunity to influence the development of the app. There is no overt statement that the policy was part of the development process. However, it is likely that the policy influenced the app because aspects of Section 12.1.2.3 *Historic Sites and Landmarks* of the policy which emphasizes the preservation of colonial heritage are evident in the apps narrative and function. Under "About the Project" the app, describes how the app is part of a greater plan to rejuvenate downtown Belize City by "preserving and revitalizing the colonial-style public architecture and private homes" but, how these historic structures have come under threat of

³⁷⁵ See Appendix K page 6.

destruction.³⁷⁶ Section 12.1.2.3 describes how the “colonial legacy remains, in part, in the form of architecture.”³⁷⁷ The emphasis on the importance of architecture throughout the app and by specifically signaling out colonial architecture thus indicates the policy’s influence. Further, the function of the app supports some of the policy interventions. Relevant policy interventions include “...*Ensure the identification, research, documentation and registration of all colonial sites and landmarks and their conservation and promotion in a manner that retains their colonial characteristics for the purpose of identity building, education and sustainable cultural tourism.*” The app serves to identify and document colonial heritage sites in its map/star function.³⁷⁸ It also supports their promotion in a way that maintains their colonial characteristics by including them in the eco-museum concept which the app supports. Further, apps are sustainable so information is shared in an earth friendly way.

Finally, there is no obvious link to the promotion of a national cultural heritage, a key goal of the national policy. However, the apps focus on colonial heritage emphasizes the importance being placed on Belize’s colonial roots and thus reflects what type of culture is being promoted as part of a national heritage.

Summary

In summary, the *Belize City Eco Museum* is intended to use by visitors, especially visitors who are able to afford cellphones with internet access and speak English. It is short on information but what information is shared about sites, especially St. John’s cathedral, suggests a valuing of the colonial heritage of the site without presenting any historical facts that describe

³⁷⁶ See Appendix K page 12.

³⁷⁷ National Institute of Culture and History, *Belize National Cultural Policy 2016-2026*, (Belmopan: 2016) 13-14, <https://www.dgft.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Copy-of-National-Cultural-Policy-Final-Policy-Document-1.pdf>.

³⁷⁸ See Appendix K page 4.

the less than positive experiences of colonialism, such as the fact that slaves were used to build the church. This thus slants the app as not being written in a decolonized manner. Additionally, the 2016 Cultural Policy, though not explicitly referenced, can be read into the site and again eschews the idea that the policy needs to be more specific on how the colonial heritage is shared and preserved such that it is done so in a decolonized manner.

Government House – Historical Introduction

One of the oldest buildings in Belize City, the Government House was built in 1814.³⁷⁹ The building was erected at the public's expense for Colonel George Arthur who was the crown's representative in the country.³⁸⁰ The site went on to serve as the official seat for a total of 38 British representatives dubbed superintendent, governor and governor general.³⁸¹ This was a private building and considered off limits to the public without an official invitation.³⁸² Official business was conducted in the house and important public figures were invited to visit, including Charles Lindbergh in 1927, Princess Margaret in 1958, and Queen Elizabeth II in 1994.³⁸³

In 1981, the Government House was the site of the official changing of the flag from the British "union jack" to the Belizean at midnight on September 21, 1981 – the official date of Belizean political independence.³⁸⁴ In 1999, the Government House was taken over by the

³⁷⁹ John Alder Burdon, ed., *Archives of British Honduras from 1801-1840* (London: Sifton Praed & Co., 1934) 2: 16.

³⁸⁰ John Alder Burdon, ed., *Archives of British Honduras from 1801-1840* (London: Sifton Praed & Co., 1934) 2: 16.

³⁸¹ "House of Culture - Belize City Tour for iPhone," Apple App Store, Accessed February 6, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/bz/app/belize-city-tour-for-iphone/id1451025438>;

³⁸² "2 Cents Cam: Old Government House, Belize Oral History," National Institute for Culture and History, streamed live on June 19, 2017, YouTube video, 7:07 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnQCWKfy1Wg>.

³⁸³ "Government House Belize," Ambergriscaye, last updated October 16, 2008 <https://ambergriscaye.com/photogallery/081016.html>.

³⁸⁴ "The History and Evolution of the Belize Flag. National Lecture 2019," National Institute for Culture and History, streamed live on September 17, 2019, YouTube video, 56:08 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3D1eg2r04c&t=2930s>.

government and opened up to the public as Belize City's House of Culture.³⁸⁵ As a House of Culture, the site functions as a museum, exhibition and performance space for the Belize City community.³⁸⁶ The museum focuses on Belize's history as a colonial outpost.³⁸⁷ Displays of colonial silver, furniture, and china fill its rooms and plaques and framed photos depict historic visitors such as Queen Elizabeth II.³⁸⁸

The building itself is a two-story wooden structure painted white with a veranda running around first story facing the sea. Historically, a veranda ran around both stories.³⁸⁹ The second story facing the sea features a series of 24 windows equally spaced across the top with green shutters at every third window. Historic photos show that the veranda ran all around the building on both the first and second stories.³⁹⁰ The inland facing façade no longer has any sign of the historic veranda and features a projecting portico serving as the main entrance. The roof is made of green metal. The modern base is made of concrete.³⁹¹ City lore suggests that the building was built using plans developed by the British architect Sir Christopher Wren.³⁹² Over the years a series of restorations have taken place with the most recent completed in 2019.³⁹³

In 2014, the building became the central focus of the "Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project." This project, executed by the Belize Ministry of Tourism in

³⁸⁵ Joe Iyo, *Discover Old Belize Town – Sites and Places of Memory* (Belize City: NICH, 2005) 28.

³⁸⁶ For more information on the Belize City House of Culture's community events see its active Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/GOVTHOC/?fref=ts>.

³⁸⁷ "Future Museum Plans Include House of Culture and Downtown Eco-Museum," News 5, last updated February 3, 2017 <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/141668>.

³⁸⁸ Janelle Cowo, "The Government House – Belize House of Culture," My Beautiful Belize Travel Publication, last updated September 3, 2014 <https://mybeautifulbelize.com/government-house-belize-house-culture/>.

³⁸⁹ Joe Iyo, *Discover Old Belize Town – Sites and Places of Memory* (Belize City: NICH, 2005) 28.

³⁹⁰ "2 Cents Cam: Old Government House, Belize Oral History," National Institute for Culture and History, streamed live on June 19, 2017, YouTube video, 7:07 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnQCWKfy1Wg>.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² "Government House Property, Belize City Eco Museum," Apple App Store. Accessed February 1, 2021

³⁹³ "Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project (Belize)," Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund, accessed March 1, 2021 <https://www.icdf.org.tw/ct.asp?xItem=21156&CtNode=29824&mp=2>.

cooperation with Taiwan ICDF with NICH serving as one of the key stakeholders sought to renovate the Government House and its surrounding buildings to serve as the anchor for the downtown Belize City eco-museum.³⁹⁴ Initial plans were to use the Government House as a site for a National Colonial Museum but these plans were abandoned.³⁹⁵ Today, the Government House itself is just one building on the greater House of Culture complex which consists of the rehabilitated Government House, a reconstructed carriage house and a new structure specifically used as the House of Culture.³⁹⁶

Government House Narrative Analysis

Analyzing the narrative presented at the site is accomplished through the review of two videos and two iPad apps. This evidence was selected due to its easy accessibility for any Belizean or visitor who has access to the internet making these narratives especially important for Belize in that they share a certain perception of Belizean heritage with the world. Further, each item of evidence was officially generated for the Government House through efforts sanctioned by NICH. The videos and applications are first described as they appear on their face and then their imagery and language are analyzed through a discourse analysis as described in the methodology.

Two videos have been generated on the Government House that present an official narrative of the site. The first, *Government House, Belize Oral History*, was created by the institute for Social and Cultural Research (ISCR) a division within the National Institute of

³⁹⁴ “Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project (Belize),” Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund, accessed March 1, 2021 <https://www.icdf.org.tw/ct.asp?xItem=21156&CtNode=29824&mp=2>.

³⁹⁵ “Future Museum Plans Include House of Culture and Downtown Eco-Museum,” News 5, last updated February 3, 2017 <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/141668>; and “Why National Colonial Museum is a Misnomer,” News 5, last updated June 23, 2017 <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/148491>.

³⁹⁶ “Reconstruction and Upgrade of Belize City House of Culture Compound,” Ministry Tourism and Diaspora Relations, YouTube video, 2:02 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWZVnpYIEck>.

Culture and History (NICH) in 2020.³⁹⁷ This video features interviews with Belizeans around town asking them about the Government House. The second, *Reconstruction and Upgrade of Belize City House of Culture Compound*, was created by the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations in cooperation with Taiwan ICDF in 2020.³⁹⁸ This video presents the finished upgrade to the Government House and House of Culture complex.

In addition, the same two iPad/iPhone applications with features on St. John's Cathedral also feature the Government House. Again, both were created by the Government of Belize in collaboration with the International Cooperation and Development Fund (Taiwan ICDF) starting in 2014.³⁹⁹ The *Belize City Tour for iPhone* was first released in January 2019 and the *Belize City Eco Museum* was released in October of 2020.⁴⁰⁰ The videos and then the applications will each be analyzed in turn.

Video I: Government House, Belize Oral History

First, to describe the video as presented on its face. In *Government House, Belize Oral History*, the Government House is the main subject.⁴⁰¹ The video is completed in a style almost identical to *St. John's Cathedral, Belize Oral History*. Throughout an upbeat rhythmic song plays in the background on loop and is softened while interviewees are speaking. Onscreen text introduces the producers of the program "KREM Television in association with." The next frame

³⁹⁷ "2 Cents Cam: Old Government House, Belize Oral History," National Institute for Culture and History, streamed live on June 19, 2017, YouTube video, 7:07 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnQCWKfy1Wg>.

³⁹⁸ "Reconstruction and Upgrade of Belize City House of Culture Compound," Ministry Tourism and Diaspora Relations, YouTube video, 2:02 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWZVnpYIEck>.

³⁹⁹ "Belize City Tour for iPhone," Apple App Store. Accessed February 6, 2021

<https://apps.apple.com/bz/app/belize-city-tour-for-iphone/id1451025438>; and "Belize City Eco Museum," Apple App Store. Accessed February 1, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/om/app/belize-city-eco-museum/id1534924018>.

⁴⁰⁰ "Belize City Tour for iPhone," Apple App Store. Accessed February 6, 2021

<https://apps.apple.com/bz/app/belize-city-tour-for-iphone/id1451025438>; and "Belize City Eco Museum," Apple App Store. Accessed February 1, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/om/app/belize-city-eco-museum/id1534924018>.

⁴⁰¹ See Appendix L for a full transcript of the program. "2 Cents Cam: Old Government House, Belize Oral History," National Institute for Culture and History, streamed live on June 19, 2017, YouTube video, 7:07 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnQCWKfy1Wg>.

follows with “the Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project” and ends with another frame stating “Presents Oral History.” At the end of the program a final frame states “2 Cents Cam Oral History.” Shots of the building today along with historic photos (presumed) and a historic marker in English are interspersed with over the shoulder shots of the interviewees.

Similar to the *St. John’s Cathedral, Belize Oral History* video, a boarder lines the bottom of the frame and displays the logos of all of the parties involved in the House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project (Historic Belize City, Taiwan ICDF, NICH, and Belize City, Belize coat of arms). Again, the overall production of the video is fine. Shots of the exterior are repeated, some in low resolution. The cuts between interviews are tight, sometimes cutting of the interviewer but always leaving in her thank you.

In this video the total word count is 921 words with a Flesch-Kincaid grade reading level of 8. Six total interviewees dictate the pacing of the video. The first five offer short, ten second or less responses to the questions posed by the interviewer who remains anonymous. Questions and answers are given in English. There are no subtitles. The question guiding the interviews is: “What is the one story you hear about old Government House now House of Culture?” The interviewer has no added direction for interviewees beyond the initial question so they are free to answer as they choose. The shortest interview lasts nine seconds and the longest lasts almost five minutes at 4:49. Four men and two women speak. All appear to be Belizean citizens.

Next, to analyze the language and imagery of the video to understand who the audience is and the type of narrative being presented. The intended audience of the video is the local. Similar to the *St. John’s Cathedral, Belize Oral History* video, this is evident in the passable but not overly high production value of the video when considering sound mixing, image quality and repetition of photos and videos of the site. This is also evident in the convivial and friendly

nature of the questions asked and answers received. Interviewees feel comfortable sharing somewhat frowned upon acts like climbing under the Government House in their youth (see video at 1:48). Further, multiple interviewees reference the Government House as a backdrop for annual marching on September 10th when Belize still celebrates the victory of the British over the Spanish at the battle of St. George's Caye.⁴⁰² Again, the video is intended for the English-speaking audience. There are no subtitles and no attempts to communicate outside of this official language of the country. This is problematic given the diversity of languages spoken in Belize and the automatic exclusion of those from the audience who do not understand English.

The answers given by the interviewees show what “stories” about the Government House are important to Belizeans. This of course assumes that they were not prepped in any manner and that, as it appears in the video, they were asked the question on the spot. Two of the six interviewees connect the Government House to slavery in some way. The first instance takes place at 1:48 of the video where the interviewee describes the shackles that were attached to the cement underneath the Government House. She saw them when climbing under the house and was told by someone that that is where the slaves used to be put. At 2:18 another interviewee associates the Government House with slavery. He tells the story of how his grandmother worked at the Government House and told him that they used to put slaves downstairs in the government house when they “do not do what they needed to do” (see video at 5:21). The grandmother continued with stating that to the governor, they were all slaves and that they (meaning the interviewee and herself) had to obey their superiors. The interviewee went on to say that he resists anything that makes him feel connected to that. This is a very powerful impression of the Government House from a local Belizean and shows a continued struggle in Belize to overcome

⁴⁰² Stephen Caiger, *British Honduras, Past and Present* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1951) 97-99.

enslavement and this in turn points to the fact that the site itself is not doing enough to decolonize the narrative and make voices, such as this interviewee, heard in a way that begins the work to rectify, if even possible, this great wrong.

Although slavery is not mentioned two separate interviewees also include antidotes of the Government House that further exemplify it as a symbol of oppression. At 1:33 of the video the interviewee shares that when he was young Belizeans were forbidden from going into the Government House before it was opened [up as a house of culture]. That this memory of exclusion is the first that pops into the interviewees mind shows how the Government House is still associated with feelings of exclusion and a sense of elitism that comes from its former use as a space where the oppressor wielded its power. It again shows that much needs to be done to address these feelings of oppression. Another interviewee expresses how when marching on the 10th of September as a child they would have to salute the Government House. This required act indicates who had power at that time and it was not the Belizeans. Again, that today this relationship is what the interviewee immediately associates with the Government House strengthens the argument that more should be done to better address the past associated with the structure because clearly its current use as a community center and museum does not outweigh its oppressive past.

This video, produced by NICH, is surprisingly unfiltered in the memories shared about the Government House. This thus makes a strong argument that the overall narrative presented in this video is one of a decolonized cultural heritage.

Regarding the influence of the 2016 Cultural Policy of Belize it can be seen in the video in a similar vein as in the *St. John's Cathedral, Belize Oral History* video with its intent to focus on colonial heritage through the subject of the video being the Government House. Again, it is

not explicitly clear if the video was produced to carry out any of the specific policy interventions laid out in section 12.1.2.3 *Historic Sites and Landmarks*. However, because it focuses on colonial history, on educating the people and was part of a larger multilateral agency effort (through the Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project) there is a case that NICH was aware of working to execute the policy when generating the video.

Finally, there is no obvious link to the promotion of a national cultural heritage. Focusing on the Government House as the video's subject promotes awareness of the building and arguably its historical importance when asking what one remembers about the site. However, the unscripted nature and video shows that NICH gave up control in its creation and likely did not have a hand in more articulatable national cultural heritage goals. The video does draw attention to the negative history associated with the site and especially in holding on the final interviewee for almost five minutes as he shared his memory that associates the Government House with slavery. He could have been cut off during the interview or on the editing room floor. However, its complete inclusion indicates that this is an important topic in the country and perhaps should be addressed in a more thorough way than it has.

Summary

In summary, *Government House, Belize Oral History* is created for the local, English speaking audience. The narrative being presented focuses on the historic site as a tool for exposing the negative history associated with the site in the eyes of the Belizean people: oppression in the form of exclusion and explicit slave use. The video, like its companion *St. John's Cathedral, Belize Oral History* video, exhibits characteristics in line with the policy interventions proposed in the 2016 National Cultural Policy. Here, the resulting narrative and indication of policy influence weigh in favor a decolonized cultural heritage.

Video II: *Reconstruction and Upgrade of Belize City House of Culture Compound*

First, to describe the video as presented on its face. In *Reconstruction and Upgrade of Belize City House of Culture Compound* the subject is the entire House of Culture complex which includes a reconstructed carriage house, a build designated as the House of Culture, a new stage and the renovated Government House.⁴⁰³ The video is short totaling 2:06 minutes long and is without narration. It features tension building background music that is reminiscent of a *Nathan for You* episode introduction. The music peaks 1:21 into the video when the renovated Government House is finally revealed. White text in English names each building in the complex. In addition to aerial and close up shots of the building's various historic markers flash by the screen and the boat of Baron Bliss (see video at 0:38) is also included.

Two logos appear at the bottom right of the screen 0:28 seconds in representing Taiwan ICDF and the Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation and remain positioned there throughout the video. The overall production of the video is quite high. This assessment is based on the resolution of the video, the clean cuts between shots and the use of music to emphasize the most important feature of the video – the renovated Government House. Finally, no humans are present in the video affirming the video's focus on the complex.

Next, to analyze the language and imagery of the video to understand who the audience is and the type of narrative being presented. Here, the outsider is the intended audience for the video. This is evident in the high production value of the video as well as in the use of English in captioning the video. The local is also part of the intended audience. The video focuses on the

⁴⁰³ See Appendix M for a full transcript of the program. "Reconstruction and Upgrade of Belize City House of Culture Compound," Ministry Tourism and Diaspora Relations, YouTube video, 2:02 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWZVnpYIECK>.

changes made to the House of Culture complex which is a community resource in Belize City. The video allows the local to thus see what was accomplished during the Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project and when considering the music and almost theatrical quality to the cinematography is intended to generate excitement regarding its completion.

The focus of the film on the buildings erected on the compound establishes what the narrative sees as important in the video: the material fabric. A video focusing on the reconstruction of the House of Culture complex has ample opportunities to show off the crew, architects, planners, preservationists, advocates, community members and other who worked together in completing the project. However, only the buildings and a smattering of the landscape and historic markers located on the complex is pictured. Further, it is clear which of the buildings is considered the most important: the historic colonial structure. This is evident in the way that the tension in the music is released where the Government House comes into frame (see video at 1:21). All of the other buildings are presented while the music builds in tension. The new building designated as the House of Culture is shown at the start only for a period of five seconds (see video at 0:33 to 0:38), the rebuilt Carriage House sneaks in six seconds (see video from 0:46 to 0:52) and the Renovated Stage gets approximately three seconds (see video from 1:07 to 1:09). In contrast, the Government House remains onscreen for twenty-eight seconds (see video from 1:21 to 1:49) after it is officially introduced. Peaks of the Government House before its official introduction are also shared from 0:53 to 1:06 in the video establishing, if there was any doubt already, that the Government House is the most important.

The notion of the Government House as the most important part of the narrative also speaks to the value the narrative places on colonial heritage. The video, as it is so titled, is about

the “Restoration and Upgrade of Belize City House of Culture Compound” and not just the Government House upgrade. Nevertheless, the colonial site gets the most attention over the new House of Culture that was built on the site. The building of a new structure for use as the House of Culture indicates that the Government House may no longer be used for those community driven purposes that the House of Culture building works to service. This gives some insight into the restoration project itself and the values attributed to the different buildings erected. The House of Culture is where heritage in Belize is supposed to be shared, passed on and created. This is where the development of a new national identity will actually take place. However, the colonial attributes of the site are still given the most credence which questions the ability of the site to actually take on the task of decolonizing the cultural heritage narrative presented at the colonial Government House site.

Further, even with the focus of the narratives on the buildings there is still an opportunity for the other side of the colonial story to be shared. Focusing on the space underneath the Government House where slaves were forced to go or any evidence of shackles could have been brought into view, reflecting on one aspect of the Government House’s history that has perhaps been glossed over. Additionally, the House of Culture was a completely new building. Why was its design selected? Does it share anything about the community or the site beyond its ability to blend into the complex in a discrete manner (see video at 0:33)? Why not build a slave quarters or other site to directly address the slavery and bring conversations about it to the forefront for visitors to the site? In failing to share the building from this perspective an argument against the presence of a decolonized cultural heritage narrative takes precedence.

Connections to the 2016 Cultural Policy of Belize are attenuated at best. Evidence of a colonial focus is clear but this video functions more in the vein of propaganda of a successful

government project as opposed to an educational resources as other videos (*St. John's Cathedral, Belize Oral History* or *Government House, Belize Oral History*). The video was the result of a multilateral agency effort (Taiwan ICDF and the Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation) but the influence of NICH on the video's production is not evident and straining the connection to the policy.

Finally, there is a link to the promotion of a national cultural heritage in Belize threaded through the narrative presented. The narrative is choreographed to elicit pride in the local Belizean who sees it. This is evident in the treatment of the project as a success in the video. Consider again the music choices, the high-quality images and the way that the buildings are introduced to the audience. Thus, Belizeans should be proud of this complex and proud of the colonial heritage it represents. The narrative's propagation of colonial heritage as the ultimate reason for why the site matters promotes it as a key element that makes up the national cultural heritage of Belize, contributing to its national identity.

Summary

In summary, *Reconstruction and Upgrade of Belize City House of Culture Compound* is created for the local, English speaking audience as well as the outsider who may visit the space one day. The narrative being presented focuses on success of the project, the pristine state of the buildings and the colonial heritage that is preserved. In not sharing other sides of the colonial narrative, especially any material evidence of slavery on the site, it does not function to present a narrative in a decolonized manner. Further, connections to cultural policy are attenuated at best and the use of the video reads closer to propaganda than educational. The scripted nature of the video and emphasis on the colonial narrative displays the importance placed on this narrative's colonial connection as a key element contributing to the greater national heritage story in Belize.

iPad/iPhone Application 1: *Belize City Tour for iPhone*

First, to describe *Belize City Tour for iPhone* in relation to the Government House as presented on its face.⁴⁰⁴ For a full description of the app generally please see analysis under St. John's Cathedral. When clicking on the Government House icon a picture of Government House, here labeled House of Culture, appears along with the hours it is open for visitors.⁴⁰⁵ Users can scroll through six different pictures of the Government House exterior and one picture of a historical marker. Tapping on the image opens a window with two headings.⁴⁰⁶ Clicking on "Information" reveals local contact information, the hours the site is open as well as a map which is conveniently linked to google maps allowing the user to easily route themselves to the site.⁴⁰⁷ Clicking on "story" gives a short overview of the history of the site.⁴⁰⁸

Here, it is clear that the audience for the app is the tourist. This is especially evident in the ability of the user to connect to google maps and find the Government House with the help of their iPad or iPhone. The Government House section is presented in English and there are no translations or subtitles.

The type of narrative being presented is one that informs and welcomes the visitor to the site. The description of the Government House is short, clocking in at 99 words, which is easy for a visitor to read on their digital device.⁴⁰⁹ Further, there are ample photos of the site exposing various elevations as well as some aerial shots. This rhetoric and imagery also establishes what is considered important about the site – the colonial building that rests upon it. The six photos of the Government House almost exclusively feature the building with only a rogue walker visible

⁴⁰⁴ See Appendix N for stills of each page of the application; "Belize City Tour for iPhone," *Apple App Store*. Accessed February 6, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/bz/app/belize-city-tour-for-iphone/id1451025438>;

⁴⁰⁵ See Appendix N page 1.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 8.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 11.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 8-10.

⁴⁰⁹ See Appendix N generally.

in a shot of the protruding portico of the buildings entrance.⁴¹⁰ There is one photo of a historic marker that is in poor condition but the marker merely states the name of the site and the year that it was built, further emphasizing that the value of the site is in the structure.⁴¹¹

The narrative's text further explores what is considered important about the site. Here, it is the colonial history as portrayed from the perspective of the colonizer. The date the original structure was built is established as is its function as the home to 38 colonial representatives from Great Britain from 1814 to 1981. Interestingly, even after Belizean independence the Government House was inhabited by the Belizean representative to the United Kingdom. However, the text chooses to cut off the number of inhabitants at the year of independence, indicating that the narrative values the story of the colonizer over the colonized. The next paragraph acknowledges the Government House's conversion into the House of Culture for Belize City in 1998. It also depicts its function as a space for exhibiting the "history and local culture of Belize City."⁴¹² This statement brings the focus of the narrative to the present day by acknowledging that the Government House is now the House of Culture and that's function is no longer to serve the crown but serve the community.

Finally, the narrative acknowledges the restoration efforts at the House of Culture complex and that the Government House will be under restoration. It also states that this restoration is possible through a project that seeks to create an eco-museum in Belize City and that the House of Culture will function as the "core museum of the eco-museum."⁴¹³ This establishes the site as the most important site included in the eco-museum project, ascribing value to its historic significance which here is mainly portrayed as colonial.

⁴¹⁰ See Appendix N page 8.

⁴¹¹ Ibid, 3.

⁴¹² Ibid, 9.

⁴¹³ Ibid, 10.

As discussed under the St. John's Cathedral section, the app aligns quite strongly with one of the policies laid out in the 2016 Cultural Policy of Belize. See this section.

Finally, there is a link to the promotion of a national cultural heritage in Belize threaded through the narrative presented. This app is for tourists, this is the heritage that Belize wants to promulgate. The focus on the colonial culture without any reference to the subaltern and their role at the site is concerning for the app promotes a history where their story is forgotten. Therefore, this app does not promote a decolonized heritage in reference to the Government House in Belize.

Summary

In summary, the application's section on the Government House focuses on the building and the colonial story it tells, from the perspective of the colonizer. This site is highly valued by the creators of the app and this is shown by its selection as the site of the main museum within the greater eco-museum project Belize is taking on with Taiwan ICDF. Unfortunately, this means that a strong sense of colonial heritage, without opportunities to share all sides of the story is not seen as a problem and sets a worrisome standard for other sites included in the app and their ability to tell a story that shares both sides of the tale.

iPad/iPhone Application 2: *Belize Eco Museum*

First, to describe the *Belize Eco Museum* application in relation to the Government House as presented on its face.⁴¹⁴ For a full description of the app generally please see analysis under St. John's Cathedral. On the main map page clicking on the star close to the Government House's actual location reveals a bubble with the words "Government House Property."⁴¹⁵

⁴¹⁴ See Appendix O for stills of each page of the application; "Belize City Eco Museum," Apple App Store. Accessed February 1, 2021 <https://apps.apple.com/om/app/belize-city-eco-museum/id1534924018>.

⁴¹⁵ See Appendix O page 1.

Clicking again opens a window with a picture of the Government House under construction and two buttons at the bottom titled “Story” and “Map/Info.”⁴¹⁶ At the top of the window four other properties included in the app are listed and one click takes you there. When clicking on “Map/Info” a new window appears with the same picture of the Government House.⁴¹⁷ Below it is a button in red titled “How to Reach Location” and clicking on it opens up google maps with directions to the Government House from your current location. Below the button is a map of the Government House taken from google.

Returning to the Government House main page clicking on “Stories” opens up a window with the same under construction picture of the Government House at the top.⁴¹⁸ Clicking on “Information” underneath the title takes you back to “Map/Info” page (when clicking on “Information”). Clicking on “Story” keeps you on the same page. Below “Stories” and “Information” is another photo of the government house.⁴¹⁹ A short list of four bullet points follows.⁴²⁰

Here, it is again clear that the intended audience for the app is the tourist, especially the tourist on the go. The app is streamlined with only two pictures of the site, a quick list of information and a link to google maps to route the user to the actual site. This section is presented in English and there are no translations or subtitles.

The type of narrative being presented is concise and highlights the importance of the site’s colonial heritage. Three of the four bullet points are a reflection of this.⁴²¹ First, the building was constructed for “Colonel George Arthur.” Second, it was built using plans

⁴¹⁶ See Appendix O page 2.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid, 5.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid, 4.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid, 3.

⁴²⁰ Ibid, 4.

⁴²¹ Ibid, 4.

developed by “illustrious British architect Sir Christopher Wren.” Third it was home to “38 Colonial Governors 1814 to 1981.” Clearly, the topic of the three bullet points is colonial history. These points reinforce the connection of the site to Great Britain. A British architect whose plans *may* have been the inspiration for the house takes up the focus of a whole point. The number of governors who stayed there is cut off at 1981, the year of independence. Reading these points leaves no doubt that this site is important because of its relationship to the colonizer’s culture. There is no reference to the plight of the colonized. No mention of enslavement or its exclusivity. Thus, the narrative being presented by the app is one that is not decolonized. It is true that the final bullet point states that the site was “Converted to the House of Culture in 1998.” However, this does not explain what a House of Culture is or its utility for the community (or tourist) and a visitor with limited knowledge about the site would not understand what it is. The final bullet point does reflect a transition of power at the site through its change in use. Moving from serving only the British representative in Belize to serving all Belizeans is a huge step in using the site to serve and be a reflection of all peoples. However, this is far from evident in the narrative text included about the site and a colonized version of Belize’s cultural heritage is presented. Finally, there is no obvious link to the promotion of a national cultural heritage in the narrative, but its focus on colonial heritage of the Government House exposes the importance of this story for those with the power to generate narratives about the site.

Summary

In summary, the Government House section of the *Belize City Eco Museum* app is intended to use by visitors to the site and especially visitors who understand English. The application is short, concise and practical in its links to google maps. The emphasis on the colonial heritage of the site without acknowledging the story of the colonized (nothing on the

enslavement that took place at the site) indicates that the section does not advance a decolonized heritage narrative.

Conclusion

When assessing the narratives presented at St. John's Cathedral and the former Government House turned House of Culture the results show that these colonial sites continue to glorify the dominant narrative through the positive emphasis of the sites connections to Great Britain. The videos and apps are generally unable to decenter the glorifying colonial narrative and focus on the non-dominant narrative: the story of the enslaved, the fraught natural disasters affecting both sites, and their use by the Belizean community today. This supports the conclusion that while Belize's cultural policy when viewed in isolation may appear to be well on its way to intellectually decolonizing the results of the narrative analysis indicate that there is more that policy must do to achieve a decentering of the narrative and an intellectual decolonization of the policy. Thus, encouraging future iterations of cultural heritage policy in Belize to directly address decolonization in relation to how a site is interpreted is crucial.

In *The History of St. John's Cathedral* the video produced by the site functions to glorify not only its connections to Great Britain but also to Western ideals of preservation. The enslaved built the church and then were not allowed to worship in it. This important piece of the greater story of St. John's Cathedral, representative of the non-dominant narrative, receives minimal time and attention. The decedents of the enslaved live in Belize City and some even attend the church. The church's decision to almost ignore their story in a public-facing narrative and instead focus on objects, age, materials and a connection with mother Europe present a narrative that functions to promote the dominant colonial narrative.

In contrast, the, *St. John's Cathedral, Belize Oral History* video organically generates a sense of unity as it focuses on the history known by the regular, non-expert community through interviews with local Belizeans. Interviews discuss enslavement, the natural disasters that struck the church and their own personal connection to the site as parishioners. This video is less about the objects, materiality and age (though this is undoubtedly mentioned with pride) but functions to broaden the narrative, decentering the dominant colonial iteration presented in *The History of St. John's Cathedral*.

The application *Belize City Tour for iPhone*, however, returns the focus of the narrative to the building, its age, and glorified connections to British colonialism. The application also offers a substantial connection to the Belize 2016 National Cultural Policy where colonial heritage is specifically referenced as in need of saving. This connection establishes that policy can act to encourage the dominant colonial narrative without having to pay regards to the non-dominant narrative – indicating a weakness the policy's path to intellectual decolonization.

The *Belize City Eco Museum* application too reflects the lack of decentering present in *The History of St. John's Cathedral* and *Belize City Tour for iPhone*. The total information shared amounts to four bullet points but focuses solely on the value of its age and glorifies its connection to Great Britain in sharing that this was the “site for the crowning of three mosquito kings.” Thus, this public facing application, intended for the tourist, doing nothing to decenter the dominant narrative.

A similar pattern of enforcing dominant colonial narratives that glorify the connection to Great Britain while minimally functioning to decenter the narratives with the stories of the people and the effects of the colonial sites on them is reflected in the analysis of the Government House turned site of the House of Culture.

In *Government House, Belize Oral History* the narrative being presented exposes the negative history associated with the site through the lens of Belizeans who identify it as a place of exclusion and enslavement. Despite this community option that the former Government House acts as a symbol of colonial oppression the other public-facing narratives analyzed in this study do not address this concern. In fact, by restoring the Government House in the late 2010s and by building a separate building where the House of Culture activities will take place, the building is once again isolated, giving it greater leverage to continue to function as a symbol of colonial oppression. This is further emphasized in *Reconstruction and Upgrade of Belize City House of Culture Compound* video. Here, the results of the restoration are shared and the narrative solely focuses on the project's success. The buildings are pristine. Colonial heritage is emphasized. Enslavement and isolation ignored. The dominant narrative is thus enforced and glorified.

Further, similar to the representation of St. John's cathedral, the narrative presented on the former Government House in both the *Belize City Tour for iPhone* and the *Belize City Eco Museum* applications values the age of the site and its connection to a glorified colonial history. Thus, the overall narratives presented at the former Government House do very little to decenter the narrative and there is again a need for the policy to address this situation for an intellectually decolonized narrative, and intellectually decolonized policy, to be achieved.

Finally, taking on a narrative analysis of a few key sights of offers limitations. An analysis of all colonial sites in Belize would proffer a more complete analysis. However, the results of a few case studies indicate the ability to determine if a site is decentering a narrative and thus contributing to an intellectually decolonized expression of heritage and therefore is worth pursuing. It is especially important when the overarching goal of Belizean cultural policy

is to create a national identity. And when not all stories are being equally represented the national identity created is not a true reflection of the people of Belize.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This thesis sought to assess the intellectual decolonization of Belize's cultural policy through an analysis of its heritage focused laws and through an interpretation of the narratives presented at two colonial heritage sites. Assessing decolonization does not result in a binary answer. Intellectual decolonization, here a small subsection of the large subject of decolonization, is an ongoing process where shifts towards a detangling of peoples' thoughts, ideas and values from those of the colonizers result in thought that is free from colonial influence and thus becomes a people's own. Decentering the dominant narrative is one way to achieve freedom from that colonial influence because it makes room for the non-dominant narrative allowing for a more equitable heritage that represents all of the diverse peoples that compose the country of Belize.

Reviewing the colonial history of Belize established the country's dominant and non-dominant historical narratives. Identifying this dichotomy is important because decentering the dominant narrative through policy creation and execution contributes to an assessment that leans towards intellectual decolonization. The dominant narratives that emerged included the ancient Maya; economic success through exploitation of environmental resources such as logwood, mahogany and sugar and the resulting enslavement of people; drivers for independence; and environmental disasters. It is important to note that there was a clear preference in the secondary sources reviewed for the "colonial" side of the story and though enslavement, independence and environmental disasters appeared in a dominant manner it was through the lens of the colonizer and a focus on these efforts from the prospective of the colonized would offer an opportunity to decenter the colonial story further. Non-dominant narratives also emerged. Specifically, the

stories of the enslaved and immigrants to Belize and the people who today identify as Garifuna, Mestizo, Creole and indigenous peoples.

Establishing dominant and non-dominant narratives provided the background necessary to analyze the cultural policy of Belize to understand how policies are acting to enforce or decenter the dominant narratives. Belize's cultural laws acted as a constant through which the metrics of heritage typologies, definitions, key actors, publics acknowledged, uses of heritage and institutional capacity building were used to evaluate the changes in laws. The laws analyzed include the 1972 Ancient Monuments & Antiquities Ordinance, the 1981 Park Systems Act, the 2003 National Institute of Culture and History Act, Ch. 331, the 2015 National Protected Areas Systems Act and finally the 2017 National Cultural Heritage Preservation Act.

The analysis of the laws led by the metrics revealed that over time there was an increased capacity to decenter the dominant historical narrative – through the increased capacity given to the institutions who manage heritage. Through the expansion of heritage definitions and typologies from Western focused “ancient sites” to intangible heritage. Through increasing the power of the general public in taking on key roles such as partaking in designation and execution of heritage. Through expanding the capacity of heritage's use from that of a museum to that of a living thing able to play roles in the lives of contemporary Belizeans and function as a catalyst for new heritage creation. In isolation this provides strong evidence that through this decentering the cultural policy in Belize is indeed intellectually decolonizing.

However, the public-facing narratives presented by the two case studies, St. John's Cathedral and the former Government House, reveal that though the policy is intellectually decolonizing this does not dictate a decentering of the narratives that already dominated a site's history, suggesting that despite the analysis of policy in isolation there is still much to be done to

achieve an intellectually decolonized heritage policy. Both site narratives generally glorified their connections to Great Britain indicating a centralized telling of history. This offered a contrast to the results of the policy analysis where an assessment of Belize's cultural laws exhibited an increasingly more representative heritage due to the inclusion of a greater diversity of heritage typologies, publics, stakeholders and heritage management styles.

What these inconsistent results reveal, however, is that narratives can be used as one factor in determining the progress of the intellectual decolonization of Belize's cultural policy, which has the power to encourage a narrative that is decentered and focused on all Belizeans, ultimately contributing to the development of a national identity representative of all. The small sampling of case studies suggests some pause, an analysis of all of the colonial sites in Belize would further support this revelation. However, given the complexity in attempting to assess the extent of decolonization, here the intellectual decolonization, of a country's policies generate one factor that can be applied to cases not just in Belize, but anywhere this inquiry is sought, is worth pursuing further.

This is beneficial to historic preservation because the field is at the moment grappling with the idea of its own decolonization of heritage by more equitably telling the stories of the formerly (and currently) subordinated. Further, there is a lack of diversity in the narratives that are preserved at the international level as well as in the U.S. Understanding the intellectual decolonization of cultural policy in Belize, a country who is grappling with these issues and is positioned to review and refine their recently implemented cultural policy in 2026, will further inform contemporary dialogues and debates as historic preservation seeks change. This is crucial not just to support the decolonization of intellectual thought but also to support the development of an equitable, national policy that supports the cultural heritage of all peoples. The power of

policy to generate change is clear and must be wielded to promote a more representative cultural heritage.

As for Belize, assessing the intellectual decolonization of their cultural policy matters because Belize's cultural policy is intended to be used to create a national identity, as explained in policy objective #1 of the 2016 National Cultural Policy. If a policy is intellectually decolonized, then the values of the Belizeans and not the colonizers will drive the development of the national identity. This will generate an identity that is inclusive of the diverse array of heritages present in Belize, representative of all of its peoples whose stories deserve to be told.

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Literature Review

A literature search was conducted to locate articles discussing the decolonization of cultural heritage policy in Belize to identify research findings on the development of cultural heritage policy in Belize after gaining independence from Great Britain in 1981. Using the key words "Belize," "decolonization," and "cultural heritage policy," databases, including JSTOR, Google Scholar, ProQuest and WorldCat were searched to locate articles. Inclusion in the literary review required articles to have "Belize" and "decolonization" or "cultural heritage policy" in the title, abstract or keywords. Very few articles turned up with all three phrases intact and initially seeking out sources related to the topic posed a challenge. By casting a wider net and reviewing articles that included "Belize" and "decolonization" but not necessarily "cultural heritage" resulted in a greater range of sources. These works looked at decolonization in the British Empire more generally, cultural heritage management in Belize, as well architecture and archaeology. This allowed for a mapping of Belize's cultural heritage policy history to begin. It also supported a more fluid definition of the term decolonization and the literature review search indirectly began shaping its definition for use in this thesis. The following categories were used to synthesize the literature reviewed: Gap in Knowledge of Belizean Cultural Heritage Policy Development, Defining Decolonization, Archeology and Cultural Heritage Management in Belize, and Issues in Equitable Representation of all Cultural Groups. In total 15 articles were found with some relation to the term and reviewed.

A. Gap in Knowledge of Cultural Heritage Policy Development

The initial search for literature on the topic of the decolonization of cultural heritage policy in Belize proved difficult. Generally, there is a deficit of scholarly materials in the country of Belize and even more so that directly analyze the policy initiatives of the country from the lens of cultural heritage outside the realm of archaeology. By focusing on case studies that look at how sites, especially sites outside the focus of archaeology, function and change as Belize changes a greater breadth of knowledge on the subject of cultural heritage policy development in Belize will be constructed.

B. Defining Decolonization

When considering how to understand when decolonization has been achieved in the cultural heritage realm looking to how it has been defined in other related arenas is helpful. One author proposes that the "decolonization of archaeology allows for the recognition of colonial structures that have shaped our discipline, and actively working to subvert such structures (Oland 2012). This idea of understanding what structures were put in place by the colonizer and what can be done to subvert them supports the idea of understanding the development of cultural heritage policy in Belize through assessing how cultural sites were managed before defining the term and assessing Belize's steps towards a decolonized policy that upholds the promise of its 2016 National Cultural Policy that emphasizes the people and the greater national identity of

Belize. Further, understanding how language use is dispersed across the country shows that native languages provide an opportunity for the government to support the needs of community by encouraging the use and preservation of these intangible resources - more evidence in support of why a decolonized cultural heritage policy is an important goal for a country (Menjívar 2018).

Tracing the development of architecture is also another way to explore the decolonization of the country's heritage policy by analyzing building design from various periods of Belize's history - from pre-columbian to the present day. The development of Belmopan, the capital of Belize designed and built in the 1960's was a heavily colonial affair as the design team was British and the designs used (except for a superficial nod to the Maya in the National Assembly Building) were focused on Western modernism and the British garden city model (Ricketts 2019). Understanding the progression of a city that was propagated as a 'New Capital for a New Nation' exposes contrasting views and emphasizes how place can reveal a country's progress in the decolonization process (Cunin 2020) and supports the analysis of sites to determine specifically the decolonization of cultural heritage policy.

C. Archeology and Cultural Heritage Management in Belize

Belize's pre-columbian past is glorified in its archeological ruins today. A focus on preservation and economic development pervades management of sites (Chase 2020). That successful management requires economic development questions the ability of policy to move away from colonial economic benefit driven roots. On the other hand, other sites have featured community-based heritage initiatives (McGill 2018). These initiatives emphasize that for heritage to be preserved more than economic benefits must result in the preservation of the site for long term community commitment to preserving archaeological sites to develop (McGill). Further, focusing on community-based heritage initiatives demonstrates how various stakeholders can learn together and by doing so question and shift power dynamics (McGill 2018). This shift of power dynamics encourages a decolonized cultural heritage policy.

D. Issues in Equitable Representation of all Cultural Groups

Serious issues of equitable representation of Belize's cultural groups show up in various articles through the themes of gaps in education on community histories and the government prioritizing their needs over the needs of certain communities. To speak to the education theme when creating a museum in Crooked Tree focusing on Creole community history the author noted that Creole history only makes up a small component of the education on Belizean history taught in schools while the histories of the Maya are more prominently featured (Harrison-Buck 2020). This emphasized how a nationalist cultural heritage agenda can mute voices as evident in the quashing of Creole history and the propagation of Maya history. Further, evidence emerged that rural Belizean communities are often excluded from government sponsored heritage activities further emphasizing a lack of equitable representation among Belize's cultural heritage groups (Harrison-Buck 2020).

Educating the community about cultural heritage work being carried out in their community is also emphasized in various articles (Harrison-Buck 2020, Oland 2012). Understanding why something is important, especially if the knowledge of this history has been lost to the community highlights a gap in the cultural heritage policies of Belize and shows how not all narratives are being preserved equally.

To speak to the government ignoring community needs a case of note is where the Belizean government, even after a ruling by the Caribbean Court of Justice to do so, has refused to give the Maya a right to self-determination on their land and has gone through with destruction of sites and profiting off of resources of such land without Maya consent (Gahman 2019). The United Nations has requested that Belize afford the Maya this right (United Nations 2018). Finally, this further supports the need for a decolonized policy because when cultural ideals are still based on an understanding developed during the colonial era where the colonizer's culture was deemed best and most important how can current policy lift up the narratives that were squashed during the colonizers reign?

CHAPTER 259 ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND ANTIQUITIES

- 1.- This Ordinance may be cited as the, Ancient-Monuments and Antiquities Ordinance. Short title.
2. In this Ordinance ... Interpretation.
 "Ancient Monument" means any structure or building erected by man or any natural feature transformed or worked by man, or the remains or any part, thereof, whether upon any land or in any river, stream or watercourse or under the territorial waters of the country, that has been in existence for one hundred years or more;
 "antiquity" means any article manufactures or worked by man, whether of stone, pottery, metal, wood, glass, or any other substance, or any part thereof-
 (i) the manufacture or workmanship of which belongs to the Mayan or other American civilization being of an age of one hundred and fifty years or more; or
 (ii) the manufacture or workmanship of which belongs to a civilization other than the Mayan or, American civilization being, an article which is of an age of one hundred and fifty years or more;
 "Minister" means the Minister of Trade and Industry or the Minister for the time being responsible for ancient monuments and antiquities and includes any person by name or by office authorised in writing by the Minister to carry out any of his functions under this Ordinance.
- 3.- (1) The provisions of this Ordinance shall not apply to personal jewellery and personal manuscripts Personal jewellery etc. exempted.
 (2) The onus of proving that any article falls within subsection (1) shall lie on the person making any such claim.
- 4.- All ancient monuments and antiquities however situate, whether upon any land or in any river, stream or water-course, or under territorial waters of the country, and whether or not before the date of the commencement of this Ordinance in private ownership, possession, custody or control, shall absolutely vest in the Crown. Vesting in the Crown of all ancient monuments and antiquities.
- 5.- (1) Subject to this Ordinance no person shall possessor have in his custody or control any ancient monument or antiquity except under a licence in writing granted by the Minister in the prescribes form. License possess.
 (2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both, and in addition, any such ancient monument or antiquity shall be forfeited to the Crown.
- 6.- (1) Any person who at the date of the commencement of this Ordinance is in possession of, or has in his custody or control, of possession any ancient monument or antiquity shall, within ninety days, register his possession, custody or control of such ancient monument or antiquity with the Minister. Registration Possession.
 (2) Any person who at any time after the date of the commencement of this Ordinance has or takes or comes into possession, custody or control of any ancient monument or antiquity shall within fifteen days of his first having or taking or coming into possession, custody or control of such ancient monument or antiquity, register his possession custody or control of such ancient monument or antiquity with the Minister.
 (3) Any person who contravenes any of the provisions of this section is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both, and in

addition, any such ancient monument or antiquity shall be forfeited to the Crown.

7.- (1) Within sixty days of any registration under section 6 the Minister may by notice in writing in the prescribed form addressed to and served upon the person who had registered his possession, custody or control of any ancient monument or antiquity acquire and thereby take possession of such ancient monument or antiquity if in his opinion the national interest would be likely to be furthered by such acquisition. Acquisition by the Crown.

(2) Where in any other case the Minister has reasonable cause to believe that any person has in his possession, custody or control any ancient monument or antiquity, and-

- (i) that person has not registered his possession, custody or control of the ancient monument or antiquity under section 6; or
- (ii) that person has not been granted a licence to keep the ancient monument or antiquity in his possession, custody or control under section 10:

the Minister may by notice in writing in the prescribed form addressed to and served upon that person acquire and thereby take possession, of such ancient monument or antiquity if in his opinion the national interest would be likely to be furthered by such acquisition.

(3) Upon service of any notice pursuant to subsections (1) and (2) the person to whom the notice is addressed shall deliver up or cause to be delivered up all his possession, custody or control of such ancient monument or antiquity when called upon to do so by the Minister.

(4) Any person who contravenes subsection (3) is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both, and in addition, the ancient monument or antiquity shall be forfeited to the Crown.

8.- (1) Upon any acquisition under section 7 (1) the Minister shall pay to the person who had registered his possession, custody or control of the ancient monument or antiquity such sum of money by way of reasonable compensation as the parties may agree to: Compensation in certain cases of acquisition.

Provided that the Minister shall in his absolute discretion be satisfied that-

- (a) the person had exercised a substantial measure of possession, custody or control over such ancient monument or antiquity; and
- (b) the person had suffered financial loss arising directly out of or in connection with the actual acquisition by the Crown of the possession of the ancient monument or antiquity; or
- (c) the person had during the period of five years immediately preceding the date of the service of the notice of acquisition under section 7 (1) expended sums of money by way of maintenance or preservation or improvement of the ancient monument or antiquity.

(2) Where the parties fail to agree on the amount of compensation to be paid under subsection (1), the matter of the amount to be paid by way of reasonable compensation shall be referred by the Minister to a single arbitrator appointed by the Minister, whose award shall be final and binding upon the parties.

(3) The Arbitration Ordinance shall have no application to any arbitration pursuant to any reference to an arbitrator under subsection (2).

(4) No payment or award by way of reasonable compensation under this section shall take account of any market or other commercial valuation of any ancient monument or antiquity or any question of prospective or future loss of any description by any person.

9. Any person in possession or who has custody or control of any ancient monument or antiquity may at any time after his registration of such ancient monument or antiquity pursuant to section 6, and provided that no notice of acquisition pursuant to section 7 shall have been served upon him, or in any other case, apply to the Minister for a licence in the prescribed form to keep the ancient monument or antiquity in his Application for licenses.

possession, custody or control.

10.- (1) The granting or withholding of any licence to keep the possession, custody or control of any ancient monument or antiquity shall be in the absolute discretion of the Minister.

Granting and revocation of licences.

(2) Any such licence may be revoked by the Minister in his absolute discretion at any time and for any reason by notice in the prescribed form addressed to and served upon the licensee.

(3) Upon service of any notice or revocation pursuant to subsection (2) the ancient monument or antiquity the subject of such notice shall be deemed to be acquired in the national interest and section 7 (3) and (4) and section 8 shall apply to such ancient monuments or antiquity.

11.- (1) No person shall sell, transfer or otherwise part with any licence or permit granted to him under the provision of this Ordinance.

Restrictions on transfer of licence or permit or alienation by licensee.

(2) No person shall give, sell, transfer or otherwise part with the possession, custody or control of any ancient monument or antiquity of which he is a licensee, except with the prior consent in writing of the Minister and upon delivery up to the Minister of his licence.

(3) Where the Minister has given his consent under sub-section (2) any person to whom the licensee has parted with his possession, custody or control of the ancient monument or antiquity shall within fifteen days report to the Minister his acquisition or possession, custody or control of such ancient monument or antiquity and shall apply to the Minister for a licence in the prescribed form to keep such ancient monument or antiquity in his possession, custody or control.

(4) Any person who contravenes this section is guilty of an offence.

12. If any person finds any ancient monument or antiquity he shall within fourteen days of such finding report the details of the finding to the Minister.

Report of finding.

13. Any person who contravenes section 12 is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both, and in addition, any such ancient monument or antiquity in the possession, custody or control of the finder shall be forfeited to the Crown.

Offence and penalty.

14. If the Minister, after inspecting the ancient monument or antiquity so found, shall decide that the national interest would be likely to be furthered by acquiring possession of such ancient monument or antiquity, he may acquire the ancient monument or antiquity by notice published in the Gazette.

Acquisition of finds by the Crown.

15. Upon any acquisition pursuant to section 14 the Minister in his absolute discretion may award to the finder of the ancient monument or antiquity such sum of money, if any, as may seem just and equitable in all the circumstances.

Reward to finders.

16.- Subject to this Ordinance and to any regulations made thereunder, the Minister may in his absolute discretion grant permit in the prescribed form-

Grant of permits.

(a) to any suitable person or group of persons to enter upon any specified lands (or in any river, stream or watercourse or under the territorial waters of this country) where ancient monuments or antiquities are or may be situated to search for and explore or excavate such ancient monuments or antiquities therefrom subject to such conditions as he may specify therein; or

(b) to any occupier to demolish for agricultural or other industrial reasons an ancient monument situated on the occupier's land subject to such conditions as he may specify therein.

- 17.- A permit to be exercised on private land shall **not be issued without the consent** of the owner, occupier, or lessee of the land unless
- (a) the name and address of the owner, occupier, or lessee of the land is **unknown** and continues to remain unknown to the Minister after he had advertised for this information in at least one newspaper published in the country and in the Gazette and fifteen days have elapsed since the last publication of the advertisement; or
- (b) the owner, occupier or lessee of the land neglects or **refuses to furnish to the Minister his views on an application for a permit upon** the Minister requesting him to do so, provided that fourteen days shall have elapsed since the Minister posted such a letter addressed to the owner, occupier or lessee of the land containing a notice that if by the end of such period the Minister had not received any such views from the owner, occupier or lessee of the land he would proceed to consider the application for a permit; or
- (c) the **Minister is satisfied that the granting of a permit is necessary for cultural or scientific or salvage reasons** and that the owner, occupier or lessee of the land has **unreasonably withheld his consent**.
18. Any person who in the exercise of any rights granted under a permit issued pursuant to section 16 (a) removes any ancient monument or antiquity from the specified land shall within fifteen days of such removal report the details of the removal to the Minister.
19. Any person who contravenes section 18 shall be guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both, and in addition, any such ancient monument or antiquity shall be forfeited to the Crown.
20. Subject to section 18, any person who in exercise of any rights granted under a permit issued pursuant to section 16 (a) shall in the case of finding any ancient monument or antiquity comply with the provisions of this Ordinance relating thereto.
- 21.- (1) In the case of any acquisition of any ancient monument or antiquity under section 14 in any case where a finding of any ancient monument or antiquity had been reported by a person or group of persons to whom a permit had been issued under section 16 (a), the Minister shall not award any sum of money but may in his absolute discretion award to the person or group of persons to whom the permit had been issued the whole or any part or portion of such ancient monument or antiquity: Provided that the Minister is satisfied that an archaeological or scientific institute or body will benefit thereby.
- (2) No award by the Minister under subsection (1) of this section shall be made unless and until a notice of intention to make the award has been published in the Gazette and a period of fourteen clear days has elapsed since such date of publication.
22. On every grant or lease of Crown Lands there shall be specifically reserved to the Crown all rights of ownership in any ancient monument or antiquity which is found in or upon any such lands granted or leased.
23. **The Archaeological Commissioner, or any person authorised by him in writing** for that purpose, may at any time enter upon lands granted or leased by the Crown, whether before or after the commencement of this Ordinance, where the grant or lease of such lands was made subject to any reservation clause such as that provided for in section 22.
- 24.- (1) Subject to subsection (2) the Archaeological Commissioner, or any person
- Landowner's consent to issue permit.
- Report of removals by permittee.
- Offence and penalty.
- Compliance with law by permit holders.
- Reward to permit holders.
- Reservation in Crown grant or lease.
- Power of entry on lands granted or leased by Crown.
- Power of entry

authorised by him in writing for that purpose, may enter upon any land **for the purpose of inspecting, searching for and locating any ancient monument or antiquity** that may be in or upon such land. etc., on other lands.

(2) The Archaeological Commissioner shall, before exercising his power under subsection (1) give reasonable notice to the owner or occupier of the land of his intention to enter upon the land for the purposes mentioned in subsection (1).

25.- (1) No person shall import, export, sell or trade in any manner in ancient monuments or antiquities or attempt to do so without a licence in writing granted by the Minister in the prescribes form. Prohibition on trade, etc. without license.

(2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and notwithstanding any punishment otherwise provided in this Ordinance, upon conviction, any such ancient monument or antiquity and any vehicle or other whatsoever used is such importation, sale or trade or attempt shall be liable for forfeiture to the Crown.

26.- (1) It shall be lawful for the Archaeological Commissioner, or any person authorised by him in writing for that purpose, or any police officer having a writ of assistance under the hand of the Chief Justice with the seal of the Supreme Court, or any warrant issued by a justice of the peace at anytime of day or night to enter upon premises wherein he has reasonable cause to suspect that any ancient monuments or antiquities may be found which have been obtained or are being possessed unlawfully and to seize therefrom any such ancient monuments or antiquities. Power to enter and search premises, to stop and search persons, vehicles etc.

(2) All writs or assistance issued pursuant to subsection (1) shall continue and be in force during the whole of the reign in which such writs are granted and issued and for six months from the conclusion of such reign.

(3) The Archaeological Commissioner, or any person authorised by him in writing for that purpose or any police officer shall have the right to stop and search any person, vehicle, vessel or aircraft or any carrier, who or which he has reasonable cause to suspect or carrying or being used to carry any ancient monuments or antiquities which have been obtained or are being possessed unlawfully and to seize therefrom any such ancient monuments or antiquities.

(4) Any ancient monuments or antiquities seized under subsections (1) and (3) shall be forfeited to the Crown unless and until a restoration order has been made by a court of summary jurisdiction which finds that such ancient monuments or antiquities were lawfully obtained or possessed, the onus of proof whereof shall lie upon the person who claims that such ancient monuments or antiquities were lawfully obtained or possessed.

27. Any person who obstructs molests or hinders in any manner any other person in the exercise of the powers conferred by sections 23, 24 or 26 is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both. Obstruction, etc. of officer.

28.- **The Minister may by order published** in the Gazette declare- Declaration of Archaeological Reserves.

- (a) any area of unalienated Crown Land containing or adjacent to an ancient monument to be an Archaeological Reserve;
- (b) any area or alienated Crown Land, title to which has reverted to the Crown containing or adjacent to an ancient monument to be an Archaeological Reserve;
- (c) any ancient monument acquired by the Minister pursuant to section 7 (1) or (4) or to section 10 (3) or to section 14, together with any land adjacent thereto, to be an Archaeological Reserve.

29. In the case of any order pursuant to section 28 (c) which includes any land adjacent to any ancient monument no such order shall have effect unless and until the Acquisition of land adjacent to

provisions of the Land acquisition. (Public Purposes) Ordinance have been complied with in respect of such adjacent land. acquired ancient monuments. Cap. 150.

30. The Minister may by order published in the Gazette specify the Archaeological Reserves which shall be open to the public, specifying the times when entry thereto is permitted and the charges, if any, by way of entry fee to such Archaeological Reserves. Archaeological reserves open to public.

31. The Minister may make rules governing Archaeological Reserves in respect of traffic, litter, the appointment and duties of caretakers and wardens, safety measures, and generally for all matters of their general regulations, and may specify penalties for any breaches of such rules recoverable on summary conviction thereof. Rules for Archaeological Reserves.

32.- (1) Subject to subsection (2), no person shall remove any earth or stone from any ancient monument except under a permit in the prescribed form issued by the Archaeological Commissioner. Prohibition of removal of earth or stones.

(2) This section shall not apply to any person or group of persons holding a permit granted by the Minister under section 16 in so far as they transfer debris or spoil within the specified land as part of their operations.

(3) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both.

33.- (1) Subject to the provisions of this Ordinance, any person who-

- (a) wilfully damages destroys or disturbs any ancient monument or in any way marks or defaces any ancient monuments; or
- (b) wilfully removes any antiquity from any ancient monument or destroys any such antiquity; is guilty of an offence,

Damage or destruction of monuments.

(2) Any person who wilfully causes or induces or attempts to cause or induce any other person to commit an offence under this Ordinance or who knowingly aids and abets any other person in the commission of any such offence is guilty of an offence.

34.- (1) The Archaeological Commissioner may direct any land owner, lessee, concessionaire, contractor or any other person who is about to engage in any operation which in the opinion of the Archaeological Commissioner is liable to destroy, damage, interfere with or otherwise be to the detriment of any ancient monument or antiquity. Control of Land operations.

- (a) not to proceed with any operation until the Archaeological Commissioner shall have had an archaeological exploration and survey carried out; and

- (b) to take or to refrain or desist from taking any such action as part of the operation as the Archaeological Commissioner may decide to be fair and reasonable for the proper protection of the ancient monument or antiquity.

(2) Any person who contravenes any direction in writing of the Archaeological Commissioner under subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both.

35. In any proceedings for an offence under this Ordinance the production of a certificate signed by the Archaeological Commissioner shall be sufficient evidence of the facts therein stated in respect of the age or archaeological source of any ancient monument or antiquity without proof of his signature or official capacity unless the defence require that he shall be called as a witness. Evidence by certificate.

36.- (1) Where any person is convicted of an offence under this Ordinance and the court by which such person is convicted finds that any aircraft, vessel or vehicle was used or employed by such person in the commission or the offence of which he is Forfeiture.

convicted such aircraft, vessel or vehicle may be forfeited to the Crown.

(2) The owner of any aircraft, vessel or vehicle forfeited under subsection (1) shall have all the rights of appeal of an accused person.

(3) For the purpose of this section "aircraft", "vessel" and "Vehicle" respectively include everything contained in, being on or attached to any aircraft, vessel or vehicle which in the opinion of the court forms part of the equipment of such aircraft, vessel or vehicle.

37.- (1) Every person guilty of an offence against the provisions of sections 11, 25 or 33 shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years, or to both. Offences and penalties.

(2) It shall be within the discretion of the Director of Public Prosecutions whether an offence against the provisions of sections 11, 25 or 33 shall be prosecuted summarily or on indictment.

38.- The Minister may by regulations-

Regulations.

who has the power

- (a) prescribe any forms of licence, notice, permit or other document required to be prescribed under this Ordinance;
- (b) prescribe the charging or levying of any fees in respect of the grant or issue of any licence or permit under this Ordinance for their waiver in specified circumstances and for their collection and recovery;
- (c) prescribe the keeping and contents of such registers, records or other books or documents by the Archaeological Commissioner or other public officer as may seem necessary for the proper carrying out of any of the provisions of this Ordinance;
- (d) prescribe the manner in which and the place to which any finder or the grantee of any permit shall carry any ancient monument or antiquity found or discovered by him;
- (e) prescribe the manner in which any ancient monument or antiquity the possession of which has been acquired by the Minister under this Ordinance shall thenceforth be disposed of or dealt with;
- (f) prescribe the manner in which any ancient monument or antiquity seized or forfeited under this Ordinance shall thenceforth be disposed of or dealt with;
- (g) appoint archaeological inspectors and prescribe the powers and duties of their office;
- (h) make any other provisions as may seem necessary for the further and better carrying out of any of the provisions of this Ordinance; and
- (i) provide that the contravention of any of the provisions of any regulations made pursuant to this section shall be an offence punishable on summary conviction and impose penalties in respect of any such offence being fines not exceeding two hundred and fifty dollars.

THE LAWS OF BELIZE

CHAPTER 259
ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND ANTIQUITIES (FORMS)
REGULATIONS
(Section 38)

[29th April, 1972]

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities (Forms) Regulations.
2. The forms contained in the Schedule to these Regulations or forms to the like effect shall be used for the purposes for which they are applicable.

SCHEDULE

Forms

FORM 1

FORM FOR REGISTRATION OF ANTIQUITIES

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cat. No. Reg. No. | Site No. | District & Country | Department of Archaeology BELIZE |
| Type of specimen | | | Period & Phase |
| Description | | Associations | |
| | | <i>Photograph</i> Print Negative | <i>Drawing</i> Sketch Scale |
| Acquisition | | | Accession No. Entry No. |
| Literature on specimen On similar specimen | | Present Location | Comments |

FORM 2

FORM FOR REGISTRATION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Site No. Reg. No. | Site Name | District | Department of Archaeology BELIZE |
| Type of Site | | Location and access | |
| Description | | Comments | |
| Owner and/or Tenant | | | |
| Source of information | | | |
| Literature | | Date of recording Recorded by | |

FORM 3

Licence to Possess Ancient Monument(s)/ Antiquity(ies)

Under section 5 (1) of the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act, License No. _____ is granted to _____ of _____ to possess/have in his/her custody or control the following ancient monument(s)/ antiquity(ies):
Registered, No. _____ in his/her sole possession.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19 _____

Minister of Trade and Industry

N.B.

It should be noted that

- (a) According to section 11 of the above mentioned Act this licence is not transferable;
- (b) According to section 10 of the above mentioned Act this licence may be revoked in the absolute discretion of the Minister responsible for Antiquities.

FORM 4

Acquisition of Registered Ancient Monument(s)/Antiquity(ies)

To:

of

Under section 7 (1) of the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act, notice is hereby served on _____ of _____ to deliver ancient monument(s)/antiquity(ies) Registered No. _____ to the Minister of Trade and Industry by _____ 19 ____.

Dated this

day of

19 ____

Minister of Trade and Industry

FORM 5

Acquisition of Unregistered Ancient Monument(s)/Antiquity(ies)

To:

Under section 7 (2) of the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act, notice is hereby served on _____ of _____ to deliver ancient monument(s) / antiquity(ies) under his / her possession, custody or control to the Minister of Trade and Industry by _____ 19 ____.

Dated this

day of

19 ____

Minister of Trade and Industry

FORM 6

Application to Acquire Licence to Keep Registered Ancient Monument(s)/Antiquity(ies)

I,

of

hereby apply to the Minister of Trade and Industry under section 9 of the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act, to keep ancient monument(s)/antiquity(ies). Registered No. _____ in my possession/custody/control.

Dated this

day of

19 ____

Signature of Applicant

FORM 7

Revocation of Licence to Possess Ancient Monument or Antiquity

To:

of

Under section 10 of the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act, Licence
No. _____ given to _____ of _____

To possess/have in his custody/control ancient monument(s) / antiquity(ies).

Registered No. _____ Is hereby revoked

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19 _____

Minister of Trade and Industry

FORM 8

*Permit to search for, explore etc. Ancient Monuments
Antiquities under section 16*

Permit No. _____ is hereby granted to _____
of _____ to enter the land specified
in the Schedule hereto and *search for and/or excavate and/or remove
* ancient monuments/antiquities which may be situated therein.

This permit shall remain valid until _____ and
shall be subject to conditions hereunder and to compliance by the Grantee
with the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act.

* The permit has been granted after obtaining the consent of the owner/
occupier/lessee of the land on which is it to be exercised whose names are
appended hereto.

CONDITIONS

(here set out conditions)

SCHEDULE

(here describe the land)

Dated this _____ day of _____ 19 _____

Minister of Trade and Industry

* Delete whatever inappropriate

FORM 9

*Licence to buy/sell Ancient Monuments, Antiquities
under section 25*

Licence No. is hereby given to
of to buy/sell* the following Ancient Monuments/
Antiquities on at

Type of Item Registration No. Name of buyer/seller*

The parties to the transaction licensed shall take cognisance of the Ancient
Monuments and Antiquities Act, in particular section 11.

Dated this day of 19

Minister of Trade and Industry

* Delete whatever inappropriate

FORM 10

*Licence to * export/import Ancient Monuments and/or Antiquities
under section 25*

Licence No. is given to
of to * export/import the Ancient Monuments and/or
Antiquities described in the form set out in the Schedule hereto. The * export/
Import licence shall be subject to the conditions herein stipulated ---
(conditions)

The items are being * exported to/imported from

.....
(insert name of * exporter/importer and address)

The agent in Belize is

Dated this day of 19

Minister of Trade and Industry

* Delete whatever inappropriate

SCHEDULE

EXPORT/IMPORT LICENCE

LIST

Project : Licence Number :

Principal Investigator :

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>..... Institution</p> | <p>Inspected by :</p> <p>Not valid without Department of Archaeology Stamp</p> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

| Container Number | Archaeology Cat. No. | Project Cat. No. | Quantity | Description |
|------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------|-------------|
| | | | | |

Page One of

EXPORT/IMPORT LICENCE

LIST

Project : Licence Number :

Inspected by :

| Container Number | Archaeology Cat. No. | Project Cat. No. | Quantity | Description |
|------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------|-------------|
| | | | | |

Page of

| Entry No. | Date | Reg. No. | Licence No. | To Whom Granted | Address | Comments |
|-----------|------|----------|-------------|-----------------|---------|----------|
| | | | | | | |

FORM 13

FORM FOR BOOK OF REGISTRATION OF ANTIQUITIES

| Entry No. | Date | Reg. No. | Name of Owner | Address | Type of Specimen | Comments |
|-----------|------|----------|---------------|---------|------------------|----------|
| | | | | | | |

FORM 14

FORM FOR BOOK OF REGISTRATION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS

| Entry No. | Date | Reg. No. | Name of Owner/Tenant | Address | Type of Site | Comments |
|-----------|------|----------|----------------------|---------|--------------|----------|
| | | | | | | |



BELIZE

**NATIONAL PARKS SYSTEM ACT
CHAPTER 215**

REVISED EDITION 2000
SHOWING THE LAW AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 2000

This is a revised edition of the law, prepared by the Law Revision Commissioner under the authority of the Law Revision Act, Chapter 3 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 1980 - 1990.

This edition contains a consolidation of the following laws-

Page

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

3

NATIONAL PARKS SYSTEM ACT

5

Amendments in force as at 31st December, 2000.



BELIZE

**NATIONAL PARKS SYSTEM ACT
CHAPTER 215**

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ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

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NATIONAL PARKS SYSTEM ACT

5

Amendments in force as at 31st December, 2000.

CHAPTER 215

NATIONAL PARKS SYSTEM

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

PART I

Preliminary

1. Short title.
2. Interpretation.

PART II

*National Parks, Nature Reserves, Wildlife
Sanctuaries and Natural Monuments*

3. Constitution of national parks, nature reserves, wildlife sanctuaries and natural monuments.
4. Essential features.
5. Restriction of entry.
6. Prohibited acts.
7. Exemptions.
8. Rules.
9. Development.

PART III

General

10. Appointment of officers.
11. Regulations.
12. Offences and penalties.
13. Powers of search, seizure and arrest.
14. Inquiries, evidence.
15. Presumption.
16. Offences punishable on summary conviction.
17. Award of portion of fine to informant.
18. Compounding of offences.
19. Disposal of forfeited objects.
20. Savings of other powers.
21. Civil remedy preserved.
22. Application of the Cattle Trespass Act.
23. Validity of certain leases, licences and permits not affected by failure to register.

CHAPTER 215

NATIONAL PARKS SYSTEM

[2nd January, 1982]

CAP. 181A,
R.E. 1980-1990.
5 of 1981¹.
S.I. 4 of 1982.
Commencement.

PART I

Preliminary

1. This Act may be cited as the National Parks System Act. Short title
2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:- Interpretation.
 - “Administrator” means, in respect of any national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument, the person appointed under section 10 to be the Administrator of the unit;
 - “antiquity” has the same meaning as in the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act; CAP. 330.
 - “cave formation” means any stalagmite, stalactite or flowstone or any piece thereof;
 - “cultural feature” means historical and palaeontological sites and objects;
 - “to fish” means to take, kill or attempt to take or kill any aquatic organism;
 - “to hunt” means to kill, take, or molest by any method and includes attempting to kill, take or molest by any method any species of wildlife;

¹ Post-independence series (Acts).

“Minister” means the Minister for the time being responsible for the National Parks System;

“national park” means any area established as a national park in accordance with the provisions of section 3 for the protection and preservation of natural and scenic values of national significance for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public;

“National Parks System” includes all national parks, nature reserves, wildlife sanctuaries and natural monuments;

“nature reserve” means any area reserved as a scientific reserve in accordance with the provisions of section 3 for the protection of nature be it biological communities or species and to maintain natural processes in an undisturbed state in order to have ecologically representative examples of the natural environment available for scientific study, monitoring, education and the maintenance of genetic resources;

“wildlife sanctuary” means any area reserved as a nature conservation reserve in accordance with the provisions of section 3 for the protection of nationally significant species, groups of species, biotic communities or physical features of the environment requiring specific human manipulation for their perpetuation;

“natural monument” means any area reserved for the protection and preservation of nationally significant natural features of special interest or unique characteristics to provide opportunities for interpretation, education, research and public appreciation;

“park offence” means any offence referred to in section 12 (1) and, where committed in a national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument, includes any offence under the Wildlife Protection Act, the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act and the Fisheries Act;

CAP. 220.
CAP. 330.
CAP. 210.

“park officer” means any person appointed under section 10 to be a park officer for the purposes of this Act, and includes any Administrator;

“wildlife” means all undomesticated mammals, birds and reptiles and all parts, eggs and nests of any of these wildlife forms.

PART II

National Parks, Nature Reserves, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Natural Monuments

3.-(1) The Minister may by Order published in the *Gazette* declare that any specified area of land shall for the purposes of this Act be-

Constitution of national parks, nature reserves, wildlife sanctuaries and natural monuments.

- (a) a national park;
- (b) a nature reserve;
- (c) a wildlife sanctuary;
- (d) a natural monument.

(2) The Minister may by Order published in the *Gazette* declare that from a specified date-

- (a) the limits of any national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument shall be altered or varied;
- (b) any national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument or part thereof shall cease to be a national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument.

Essential features.

4. Save as hereinafter provided-

- (a) no person shall be entitled to enter any **national park** except for the purpose of observing the fauna and flora therein and for the purpose of education, recreation and scientific research;
- (b) no person shall be entitled to enter any **nature reserve** or in any way disturb the fauna and flora therein;
- (c) no animal shall be hunted, killed or taken and no plant shall be damaged, collected or destroyed in **a national park** or **nature reserve**;
- (d) no person shall hunt, shoot, kill or take any wild animal, or take or destroy any egg of any bird or reptile or any nest of any bird, in any **wildlife sanctuary**;
- (e) no person shall disturb the natural features of a **natural monument**, but may use the unit for interpretation, education, appreciation and research.

Restriction of entry.

5.-(1) No person shall enter or remain within any **national park** except under the authority and in accordance with the conditions of a permit issued by the prescribed officer on payment of the prescribed fee.

(2) A permit under subsection (1) shall be issued only for the purpose of enabling the permit holder to study or observe the fauna and flora in a national park.

(3) No person shall enter or remain within any **nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument** except under the authority and in accordance with the conditions of a permit issued by the prescribed officer on payment of the prescribed fee.

(4) If no fee is prescribed for the issue of a permit under subsection (1) or (3), such permit shall be issued free of charge.

6. **No person shall**, within any national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument, except as provided under section 7, or with the written authorisation of the Administrator-

Prohibited acts.

- (a) permanently or temporarily reside in or build any structure of whatever nature whether as a shelter or otherwise;
- (b) damage, destroy or remove from its place therein any species of flora;
- (c) hunt any species of wildlife;
- (d) remove any antiquity, cave formation, coral or other object of cultural or natural value;
- (e) quarry, dig or construct roads or trails;
- (f) deface or destroy any natural or cultural features or any signs and facilities provided for public use and enjoyment;
- (g) introduce organic or chemical pollutants into any water;
- (h) clear land for cultivation;
- (i) graze domestic livestock;
- (j) carry firearms, spears, traps or other means for hunting or fishing;
- (k) introduce exotic species of flora or fauna;

- (l) catch fish by any means whatsoever;
- (m) do any other act which may be prohibited by any Order made by the Minister from time to time.

Exemptions.

7.-(1) The Minister may at his discretion issue permits to *bona fide* organisations and scientists and other qualified professionals or specialists for cave exploration, collection of specimens of particular species of flora or fauna, group education activities, archaeological or palaeontological exploration, scientific research and related activities. All such permits shall require that copies of all data and findings from any of these activities, or any papers based on them, shall be provided to the Minister.

Importance of Experts (again)

(2) The Minister may at his discretion, and subject to such conditions as he may think desirable to attach thereto, issue permits for fishing in any national park, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument where such activity will not destroy or seriously detract from those values that were the principal reason for establishment of the unit.

Rules.

8.-(1) The Minister may from time to time make rules for the proper conduct and good management of any national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument or of the entire National Parks System and make rules which, *inter alia*-

- (a) prohibit overnight camping;
- (b) prohibit camping in unauthorised areas;
- (c) establish hours when any area will be open to the public;
- (d) prohibit open fires in specified areas and regulate the lighting of open fires anywhere within the park, reserve, sanctuary or other area covered by this Act;

- (e) prohibit the use of vehicles on foot trails;
- (f) prohibit the landing of aircraft except on areas provided for such purposes;
- (g) limit the use of vehicles to established roads;
- (h) prohibit the setting off of fireworks of any description or the making of any type of noise whatsoever;
- (i) require that any dog brought into the area be kept on a leash not over four feet (1.2 metres) long;
- (j) prohibit the playing of radios, tape players, gramophones and musical instruments altogether or in a manner which is disturbing to other visitors;
- (k) prohibit any act that detracts from the good order or general enjoyment of the area;
- (l) prohibit the selling of any food, beverage or goods except by licensed parties.

(2) The contravention of any rule made under this section shall constitute an offence.

9.-(1) Upon the declaration of any area to be a national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument, the officer responsible shall **place identification signs and regulations** regarding the use of the area at all road and trail entrances to the area, including waterways where feasible. Development.

(2) The **officer** responsible shall, as soon as practicable and prior to the construction of roads, trails or visitor facilities in a national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument, **prepare a management plan for the**

area for approval by the Minister.

(3) Public access and facilities shall be developed in a manner which will minimise detrimental impacts on the various resources and overall scenic values of the park, reserve, sanctuary or monument.

(4) The Minister may, where such action is consistent with the purpose for which a national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument was established, grant licences for the provision of visitor facilities and services. Such licences may *inter alia* provide for-

- (a) the location, number and general specifications for the type or types of facilities to be developed;
- (b) the specific services to be provided;
- (c) approved methods of debris disposal;
- (d) sanitation and cleanliness standards;
- (e) reporting the amount of visitor use;
- (f) standards of behaviour and dress for employees of the licensee who have contact with the public;
- (g) freedom of examination of all business records by the officer responsible for the administration of the park, reserve, sanctuary or monument.

PART III

General

Appointment of
officers.

10.-(1) The Public Services Commission may appoint an Administrator for

each national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument and such other park officers as the Minister shall deem necessary, to perform the functions and exercise the powers assigned to each of them by this Act and regulations made thereunder.

(2) The Chief Forest Officer shall be responsible for the administration of this Act.

11.-(1) The Minister may from time to time make regulations for the implementation and administration of this Act, and such regulations may provide that the contravention of any of them shall be an offence. Regulations.

(2) All regulations shall be laid before the National Assembly as soon as may be after the making thereof, and if the National Assembly by resolution requests that any regulation laid before it be rescinded, such regulation shall be rescinded by the Minister but without prejudice to the validity of anything done thereunder or the making of a new regulation.

12.-(1) Any person who contravenes or aids or abets the contravention of any of the provisions of sections 4, 5 and 6, or of any rule made under section 8 or regulation the contravention of which has been made an offence under section 11, commits an offence and shall on summary conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding two hundred dollars, and if the offender has within a preceding period of five years been convicted of a park offence or has paid compensation under section 18, he shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars or imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment. Offences and penalties.

(2) The court may in addition order the cancellation of any licence or permit granted under the provisions of this Act or any regulations made hereunder and the forfeiture of any natural or cultural object of value in respect of which an offence under subsection (1) has been committed and of any vehicle, vessel or other transport used in the commission of the offence.

(3) When any person has been convicted of a park offence the court may, in addition to any other penalty provided by this Act or any other enactment, assess the amount of any damage which may have been caused by such offender and cause the same to be recovered in such manner as if it were a fine or, in the case of unauthorised establishments, buildings, huts, enclosures, standing crops, roads or trails on the National Parks System, may order the removal of the same within such period as may be fixed and the restoration of the places as nearly as possible to their previous condition.

Powers of search,
seizure and arrest.

13.-(1) Any park officer may-

- (a) when he has reasonable grounds to suspect that a person is in possession of any article in respect of which a park offence has been committed, search such person or any baggage, parcel, vehicle, tent or buildings under the control, custody or possession of such person or his agent or servant;
- (b) seize any object in respect of which he has reasonable grounds to believe that a park offence has been committed;
- (c) arrest any person he has reasonable grounds to suspect of having committed any park offence if the person refuses to reveal his name and residence, states a name and residence which there is reason to believe is false or gives reason to believe he will abscond.

(2) Anything seized and any person arrested under this section shall, without unnecessary delay, be brought before the nearest magistrate.

Inquiries,
evidence.

14. Any park officer may, if he suspects that a park offence has been committed, question any person and record any statement he thinks relevant to the investigation of the offence. In any subsequent prosecution, a magistrate may admit such statement in evidence provided such statement was taken in the presence of the accused. An accused person may at his own expense

require the presence of any such witness for cross-examination.

15.-(1) When any person is found in possession of any object in respect of which a park offence has been committed he shall, unless he can prove that he came by the object innocently and without knowledge of the offence, be presumed to have committed the offence. Presumption.

(2) When in any proceedings under this Act a question arises as to whether or not any natural or cultural object of value is the property of the Government, such natural or cultural object shall be presumed to be the property of the Government until the contrary is proved.

16. All offences under this Act shall be punishable on summary conviction on information which may be laid by the Administrator of the park, reserve, sanctuary or monument, or by any person authorised by him in writing. Offences punishable on summary conviction.

17. The court may award any amount, not exceeding one-half of the fine imposed for an offence under this Act, to any person who may have supplied such information as may have led to the conviction of the offender. Award of portion of fine to informant.

18.-(1) The Minister, and the Administrator of any park, reserve, sanctuary or monument who is so authorised by the Minister in writing, may accept from any person admitting the commission of an offence under this Act a sum of money which shall in no case exceed one hundred dollars, by way of compensation for the offence and on payment thereof such person, if in custody, shall be discharged and no further proceedings shall be taken against him in respect of the offence. Compounding of offences.

(2) All moneys received under this section shall be paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

19. Any antiquity forfeited under the provisions of this Act shall be placed in the custody of the Archaeological Commissioner. All other objects so forfeited shall, with the approval of the Minister, be disposed of by the Administrator in such manner as the Minister may prescribe. Disposal of forfeited objects.

Savings of other powers.

20. Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to prevent any person from being prosecuted under any other law for any act or omission which constituted an offence under that law or from being liable under such other law to any higher punishment or penalty than that provided under this Act, provided that no person shall be punished twice for the same offence.

Civil remedy preserved.

21. Nothing in this Act shall derogate from or interfere with the right of the Government or of any person to sue for and recover compensation for or in respect of damage or injury caused by a park offence.

Application of the Cattle Trespass Act.
CAP. 208.

22. Cattle trespassing in or upon any land which has been declared a park, reserve, sanctuary or monument shall be deemed to have been found in a prohibited area for the purpose of section 6 of the Cattle Trespass Act.

Validity of certain leases, licences and permits not affected by failure to register.
CAP. 327.

23. Notwithstanding anything contained in the General Registry Act, no lease of three years or less nor any licence or permit issued under the provisions of this Act shall be deemed invalid or non-effective because of it not being lodged for record in the General Registry.



BELIZE

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY ACT CHAPTER 331

REVISED EDITION 2000 **SHOWING THE LAW AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 2000**

This is a revised edition of the law, prepared by the Law Revision Commissioner under the authority of the Law Revision Act, Chapter 3 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 1980 - 1990.

This edition contains a consolidation of the following laws-

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ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

3

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY ACT 10

Amendments in force as at 31st December, 2000.



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CHAPTER 331

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY

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CHAPTER 33146 of 1999.¹**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY***[7th February, 2000]***PART I***General*

Short title. 1. This Act may be cited as the National Institute of Culture and History Act.

Interpretation. 2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:-

“Assembly” means the General Assembly of the National Institute of Culture and History;

“Board” means the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Culture and History constituted in accordance with this Act;

“Institute” means the National Institute of Culture and History;

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for Culture;

“President” means the President of the Institute appointed under section 13;

¹. This Act had not yet come into force by 31st December, 2000.

PART II

Establishment, Objects and Powers of the Institute

3.-(1) There is hereby established a body called the National Institute of Culture and History.

Establishment
of the Institute.

(2) The Institute shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal, with power to enter into contracts, to sue and be sued by law in its corporate name and may for all purposes be described by such name, to acquire, hold, mortgage, lease and dispose of all kinds of property, moveable and immovable, real or incorporeal, and to do and perform all such acts and things as bodies corporate may by law do and perform, subject to the provisions of this Act.

4. The objects for which the Institute is established and the principles which shall guide its work are as follows:

Objects and
principles.

- (a) to encourage creativity by promoting full freedom of expression within the law;
- (b) to foster cross-cultural understanding and mutual respect, given Belize's multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual nature;
- (c) to apply the principle of decentralization in order to ensure that the several districts of Belize are beneficiaries of and contributors to cultural policies and programmes;
- (d) to promote the effective integration of culture and the arts as curricular subjects in primary and secondary schools;
- (e) to ensure the greatest possible participation of civil society in the making and execution of policies and programmes, particularly from cultural workers, artists and organized groups;

- (f) to ensure the participation of youth and the proper handling of gender issues;
- (g) to take full advantage of the latest technological advances, particularly in ensuring that the mass media contribute effectively to cultural development;
- (h) to ensure that cultural promotions stress the values of national and regional community while locating Belizean culture as part of universal culture and insisting on striving for excellence and a strong ethical foundation;
- (i) to so conduct international relations and exchanges as to safeguard and enhance national sovereignty and dignity; and **Decolonize alert!**
- (j) to allow free and democratic access to information within the framework of the law.

Functions of the
Institute.

5. The functions of the Institute are:

- (a) to implement the objects and principles set out in section 4 above;
- (b) to coordinate and supervise the policies and programmes of the various divisions of the Institute established under this Act; and
- (c) to do any other thing which is concerned directly or indirectly with the strengthening, preservation or development of cultural, historic or artistic activity in Belize.

Establishment of
Divisions.

6. The Institute shall be comprised of the following divisions:

- (a) the Museum of Belize, established under section 30 of this

Act;

- (b) the Institute for the Research and Management of Material Culture, established under section 34 of this Act;
- (c) the Institute of Social and Cultural Research, established under section 71 of this Act;
- (d) the Institute of Creative Arts, established under section 77 of this Act.

7.-(1) For the purpose of directing the affairs of the Institute, there shall be constituted a Board of Directors which shall consist of:

Board of
Directors.

- (a) the President of the Institute as Chairperson;
- (b) the Director of the Museum of Belize;
- (c) the Director of the Institute for the Research and Management of Material Culture;
- (d) the Director of the Institute of Creative Arts;
- (e) the Director of the Institute of Social and Cultural Research;
- (f) two members appointed by the General Assembly; and
- (g) one member appointed by the Minister responsible for Tourism.

(2) A quorum of all meetings of the Board shall be seven members.

(3) The Board may act notwithstanding a vacancy among its mem-

bers.

(4) The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board but, in the absence of the Chairperson, the Directors present shall elect one of their number to preside at that meeting.

(5) All decisions of the Board shall be by a majority of the members present and voting thereon at the meeting and in the case of an equality of votes, the person presiding shall have a second or casting vote.

(6) (a) A member of the Board who is in any way directly or indirectly interested in a contract made or proposed to be made by the Board, shall, as soon as possible after the relevant circumstances have come to that member's knowledge, disclose the nature of the interest at a meeting of the Board.

(b) Any disclosure made under paragraph (a) of this subsection shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board and the member:-

- (i) shall not take part after the disclosure in any deliberation or decision of the Board with respect to the contract; and
- (ii) shall be disregarded for the purpose of constituting a quorum of the Board for any such deliberation or decision.

(7) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Board may regulate its own procedure.

Establishment of
the General
Assembly.

8.-(1) There shall be constituted a body to be known as the General Assembly of the Institute to be appointed as follows:

- (a) two members to be appointed by each Town Council in Belize;

- (b) eight members, of whom six shall be appointed by the Belize City Council, and two by the City of Belmopan;
- (c) two members for each district to be appointed by the Chairpersons of the village councils;
- (d) two members to be appointed by the non-government organization (NGO) community and cultural organizations that have registered with the Institute in accordance with the regulations made under this Act;
- (e) ten members to be appointed by the Minister responsible for Culture, being distinguished artists, academics or other persons who in the Minister's opinion will contribute effectively to the development and preservation of culture in Belize; and
- (f) the members of the Board of Directors of the Institute, *ex officio*, and without a right to vote.

(2) The appointment of every member of the Assembly other than the *ex officio* members shall be evidenced by an instrument in writing given under the seal or other legally acceptable authority of the body appointing such member.

(3) Every member of the Assembly, except *ex officio* members, shall hold office for two years and shall be eligible for reappointment.

(4) Appointments by the elected bodies referred to in subsection (1) (a), (b) and (c) above shall take place as soon as possible after the coming into operation of this Act and every two years thereafter, and the tenure of such appointees shall not be affected by any changes in the composition of those bodies, whether caused by elections or otherwise.

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Functions of the General Assembly. | <p>9. The functions of the Assembly are, subject to the provisions of this Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) to formulate policy guidelines for the proper carrying out of the objects of the Institute; (b) to advise the Board on programmes and projects to be carried out in pursuance of the objects of the Institute; (c) to monitor such programmes and projects; and (d) to receive and consider narrative and financial reports from the Board. |
| Meetings of the General Assembly. | <p>10.-(1) Meetings of the General Assembly shall take place at least twice per year in April and October of each year and shall be open to the public.</p> <p>(2) The first meeting of the Assembly shall not take place until six months after the commencement of this Act.</p> <p>(3) If for any reason in any year it is impractical to hold a meeting in the month indicated, it shall be held as soon thereafter as practicable.</p> |
| Regulations. | <p>11. Subject to the provisions of this Act, the General Assembly may provide for its own regulations and the conduct of its meetings.</p> |
| Authentication of documents. | <p>12.-(1) The common seal of the Institute shall be authenticated by the signature of the President and a member of the Board.</p> <p>(2) Every document purporting to be an instrument issued by the Institute and to be sealed with the seal of the Institute and authenticated in the manner provided by this section shall be received in evidence and be deemed to be such an instrument without further proof unless the contrary is shown.</p> |

PART III

Management and Staff of the Institute

13.-(1) The Chief Executive Officer of the Institute shall be a suitably qualified Belizean citizen called the “President” and shall be appointed by the Minister on such terms and conditions as may be approved by the Minister. President.

(2) The President shall be paid by the Institute such salary and allowances as may be determined by the Minister.

14. The President shall be responsible for the management of the Institute in accordance with the provisions of this Act and any regulations made hereunder and in accordance with the policies established by the General Assembly. Duties of President.

15. The President shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, appoint such officers and employees of the Institute and its divisions as may be necessary. Appointment of staff.

16.-(1) The post of President, and the posts of other officers and employees appointed pursuant to section 15 above who are on the administrative, technical, professional, clerical and secretarial staff shall be pensionable under the Pensions Act, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in that Act or any other enactment. Persons holding ancillary posts of the semi-skilled or unskilled category shall be entitled to retirement benefits under the Government (Open Vote) Workers Regulations, as amended from time to time. Declaration of pensionable posts. CAP. 30. S.I. 145/1992.

(2) Where an officer in the public service is transferred to an office under the Institute and he retires or resigns on pension from, or dies while in the service of, the Institute, his service in the public service shall rank as qualifying service or pensionable service, as the case may be, for purposes of determining eligibility for a gratuity or pension under the Pensions Act. CAP. 30.

(3) Notwithstanding any contrary provision in the Pensions Act or any other enactment amending or replacing that Act, where a person employed CAP. 30.

CAP. 30. in a pensionable office by the Institute is transferred to a pensionable post in the public service, his service under the Institute shall rank as qualifying service or pensionable service, as the case may be, for purposes of determining his eligibility for a gratuity or pension under the Pensions Act.

(4) When making payment for a pension or gratuity in respect of officers referred to in subsections (2) and (3) above, the Government shall pay the whole pension or gratuity, but the Institute shall contribute to the Government for the portion representing the number of years of pensionable service rendered by the officer in the employment of the Institute.

Regulations relating to staff.

17. Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Board may make regulations determining generally the conditions of service of employees of the Institute, and in particular, may make regulations relating to-

- (a) the appointment, dismissal, discipline, hours of work, pay and leave of such employees;
- (b) appeals by employees against dismissal or other disciplinary measures;
- (c) the grant of pensions, gratuities, salaries or benefits to the employees and their dependants; and
- (d) the establishment and maintenance of superannuation funds and provident funds and the contributions payable thereto and the benefits received therefrom.

Training of employees.

18. The Institute may, for the purpose of advancement of the skills of its employees, provide such assistance and facilities as may be necessary for training, education and research.

Right to form trade unions.

19. The Institute shall recognize the right of its employees to form or belong to trade unions for the protection of their interests.

PART IV

Financial Provisions

20.-(1) The Minister responsible for Finance may, by Order published in the *Gazette*, transfer to the Institute any property belonging to the Government which appears to him to be necessary or useful to the Institute for carrying out its functions under this Act, and such property shall vest in the Institute by virtue of the Order and without further assurance.

Transfer of property.

(2) All property vested in the Institute under subsection (1) above shall be held in trust for the people of Belize.

21. The Government may lend the Institute such sums as the Minister responsible for Finance certifies are required to enable the Institute to commence or continue its functions, to be repaid by the Institute at such times and by such methods as the said Minister shall determine.

Loans by Government.

22. The Institute may, with the consent of the Minister responsible for Finance, borrow money either within Belize or elsewhere for the purpose of carrying out its duties, powers and functions under this Act.

Power to borrow money.

23. The funds and resources of the Institute shall consist of the following:-

Funds and resources.

- (a) such sums as may be provided for the purpose from time to time by the National Assembly;
- (b) such sums as may be made available under sections 21 and 22;
- (c) such sums as may accrue to the Institute from the conduct of its business under this Act, including sales of books, documents or journals published by the Institute and all sums recovered in payment of fees or charges imposed by the Institute by

regulations;

- (d) grants, donations, benefactions and endowments from any source, including regional and international organizations; and
- (e) all other sums or property which may in any manner become payable to or vested in the Institute in respect of any matter incidental to its functions.

Audit and accounts.

24.-(1) The Institute shall keep accounts of its transactions and all such accounts shall be audited by an auditor to be appointed by the Board.

(2) The members, officers, agents and employees of the Institute shall grant to the auditor appointed under subsection (1) access to all books, documents, cash and securities of the Institute and shall give to the auditor on request all such information as may be within their knowledge in relation to the operations of the Institute and the Board.

(3) The Institute shall, with the approval of the Board, write off bad debts.

Annual reports.

25. The Institute shall, not later than six months from the end of the financial year ending on the 31st March of each year, submit to the Minister a report for the preceding financial year containing-

- (a) a balance sheet and a complete statement of profits and losses duly audited; and
- (b) the report of the auditor.

Submission of budget estimates.

26.-(1) The Institute shall, in such form and by such dates as may be prescribed by the Financial Secretary, prepare and submit to the Minister responsible for Finance, through the Minister, estimates of income receivable and the expenditure to be incurred during each financial year (including any

supplementary estimates), and the Minister responsible for Finance shall present the said estimates to the National Assembly with such amendments, if any, as he may consider necessary.

(2) Except with the approval of the Minister responsible for Finance, no further sum shall be expended during any financial year other than that provided in the estimates relating to such financial year.

27.-(1) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Income and Business Tax Act, the income, revenue and other receipts of the Institute shall be exempt from the payment of income tax and business tax.

Tax exemptions.
CAP. 55.

(2) All instruments executed by or on behalf of the Institute shall be exempt from stamp duty.

(3) Notwithstanding anything contained in any Act, all material, apparatus or equipment of any kind imported into the country by the Institute for the purpose of carrying on its undertakings shall be free of all customs duty and any other tax whatever.

28. The Institute shall have the status of a charity for all the purposes of any law for the time being affecting charities, and in particular the Companies Act.

Charitable status.
CAP. 250.

PART V

Museum of Belize

29. In this Part, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Director” means the Director of the Museum of Belize appointed under section 31 of this Act;

“Museum” means the Museum of Belize established under section 30 of this Act.

Interpretation
of words used
in this Part.

Establishment of Museum of Belize. 30.-(1) There shall be established as a division of the Institute, a body to be called the Museum of Belize for the collection, preservation and exhibition of objects of scientific, historical or artistic interest.

(2) There shall be established in each district of Belize, as a division of the Museum, a House of Culture for the promotion of Belizean Culture.

Director and other staff. 31.-(1) There shall be a Director of the Museum who shall be a suitably qualified Belizean citizen appointed by the President with the approval of the Minister under such terms and conditions as may be approved by the Minister in consultation with the Board.

(2) The Director shall, subject to the approval of the President, appoint suitably qualified Belizean citizens as Curators and such other employees as may be necessary for the carrying out of the functions of the Museum.

(3) The Director shall be responsible for carrying out the functions of the Museum, subject to the approval of the Board.

Functions of the Museum. 32.-(1) The functions of the Museum shall be to:

- (a) develop and promote respect for the natural and human environment of Belize;
- (b) establish such galleries and other suitable forms of display as may be necessary for the exhibition of objects of historical, cultural, natural or scientific interest;
- (c) provide and maintain such services as are necessary or desirable for the operation of the Museum, or as the Board may require;

- (d) collect, preserve and restore objects of historical or cultural interest;
- (e) provide and maintain gardens, greenhouses, rooms for recreation and refreshment, lecture rooms, libraries, museums, Houses of Culture, shops, machinery and conveniences as may be thought desirable for the entertainment, instruction and education of the public with or without charge and to do all things conducive thereto;
- (f) exchange, donate, lend or otherwise allow the use of objects of historical or cultural interest and other museum material in its collection and use any revenue obtained therefrom to further its collection;
- (g) lend or borrow objects of historical or cultural interest and other museum material on long-term or short-term loan;
- (h) organize, sponsor, arrange for and participate in travelling exhibitions, in Belize and internationally, of objects of historical or cultural interest and other museum material in its collection and from other sources;
- (i) provide facilities to permit qualified individuals to use and study its collection;
- (j) promote knowledge, and disseminate information, related to its purpose, throughout Belize and internationally, by such means of education and communication as are appropriate;
- (k) develop, operate and maintain branches or exhibition centres;
- (l) promote research and disseminate its research by lectures, publications or other means;

- (m) liaise with other institutions having similar objects for mutual cooperation; and
- (n) carry out such other activities as may be prescribed from time to time by regulations made under this Act.

(2) In carrying out the functions of the Museum, the Board may, on the recommendations of the Director:-

- (a) construct, alter and maintain buildings at the Museum and elsewhere;
- (b) require other divisions of the Institute to deliver objects and documents for purposes of display in the Museum;
- (c) grant, on such terms and conditions as the Board thinks fit, authority to carry on any trade or business at the Museum;
- (d) grant leases, subleases or other interests or concessions in respect of land or buildings or of the use of the name or logo or other property of the Museum or for the provisions of services to the public subject to the payment of rent or other consideration as the Board may think fit;
- (e) carry on such activities as appear to be advantageous, necessary or desirable for or in connection with the exercise and performance of its functions;
- (f) charge for goods, services and admission and use the revenue obtained therefrom for its own purposes.

PART VI

*Institute for the Research and Management
of Material Culture*

33. In this Part, unless the context otherwise requires:-

Interpretation
of words used
in this Part.

“Director” means the Director of IRMAC appointed under section 36 of this Act;

“IRMAC” means the Institute for the Research and Management of Material Culture established under section 34 of this Act;

“the Repealed Act” means the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act;

CAP. 330.

“ancient monument” means any structure or building erected by man or any natural feature transformed or worked by man, or the remains or any part thereof, whether upon any land or in any river, stream or watercourse or under the territorial waters of Belize, that has been in existence for one hundred years or more;

This definition seems straight out of the 1972 Act

“antiquity” means any article manufactured or worked by man, whether of stone, pottery, metal, wood, glass, or any other substance, or any part thereof:-

- (i) the manufacture or workmanship of which belongs to the Maya civilization, being of an age of one hundred years or more; or
- (ii) the manufacture or workmanship of which belongs to a civilization other than the Maya civilization, being an article which is of an age of one hundred years or more.

34. There shall be established as a division of the Institute, a body to be called the Institute for the Research and Management of Material Culture

Establishment
of IRMAC.

(IRMAC) responsible for research on the material culture of Belize and for the preservation and management of such objects, structures and sites as are entrusted to it by virtue of this Act.

Objects and
functions of
IRMAC.

35. The objects and functions of IRMAC shall be as follows:

- (a) to carry out the powers and duties with regard to ancient monuments and antiquities set out in this Act;
- (b) to collect, store, document and catalogue antiquities and other objects of material culture;
- (c) to conduct, licence and supervise research on ancient monuments, antiquities and other objects of material culture;
- (d) to publish by any means whatever the results of its research;
- (e) to provide facilities to permit qualified individuals to study its collection;
- (f) to establish and foster liaison with other organizations with purposes similar to its own;
- (g) to preserve and restore objects within its collection or otherwise in pursuance of its purposes;
- (h) to organize, sponsor, arrange for and participate in exhibitions, including travelling exhibitions in Belize and internationally, of objects of material culture;
- (i) to provide the Museum of Belize, upon request, objects within its collection for the use of the Museum on such terms and conditions as shall be agreed between the Director of IRMAC and the Director of the Museum of Belize;

- (j) to develop, operate and maintain branches or exhibition centres whether permanent or temporary;
- (k) to charge for services and admission and use the revenue thereof for its own purposes;
- (l) to conduct educational and training programmes.

36.-(1) There shall be a Director of IRMAC who shall be a suitably qualified Belizean citizen appointed by the President subject to the approval of the Minister under such terms and conditions as may be approved by the Minister.

Director and other staff.

(2) The Director may, subject to the approval of the President, appoint such other employees as may be necessary for carrying out the functions of IRMAC.

37. All ancient monuments and antiquities wherever situate, whether upon any land or in any river, stream or watercourse, or under the territorial waters of Belize, shall absolutely vest in the State.

Vesting in the State.

38.-(1) Subject to this Act, no person shall possess or have in his custody any ancient monument or antiquity except under a licence in writing granted by the Director in the prescribed form.

Licence to possess ancient monument or antiquity.

(2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment, and in addition, any such ancient monument or antiquity shall be forfeited to the State.

Register of
ancient monu-
ments and
antiquities.

39.-(1) Any person who at any time has or takes or comes into possession, custody or control of any ancient monument or antiquity shall within fifteen days of his first having or taking or coming into such possession, custody or control of the ancient monument or antiquity, register his possession, custody or control with IRMAC.

(2) The register kept under section 6 of the Repealed Act shall be incorporated in and become part of the register to be kept under this Act, and all duties and obligations under section 6 of the Repealed Act shall pass to IRMAC.

(3) Any person who contravenes any of the provisions of this section commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment, and in addition, any such ancient monument or antiquity shall be forfeited to the State.

Acquisition by
State.

40.-(1) Within sixty days of any registration under section 39, the Director may by notice in writing in the prescribed form addressed to and served upon the person who has registered his possession, custody or control of any ancient monument or antiquity, acquire and thereby take possession of such ancient monument or antiquity, if in his opinion the national interest would likely be furthered by such acquisition.

(2) Where in any other case the Director has reasonable cause to believe that any person has in his possession, custody or control any ancient monument or antiquity, and:-

- (i) that person has not registered his possession, custody or control of the ancient monument or antiquity under section 39; or
- (ii) that person has not been granted a licence to keep the ancient monument or antiquity in his possession,

custody or control under section 43,

the Director may by notice in writing in the prescribed form addressed to and served upon that person, acquire and thereby take possession of such ancient monument or antiquity, if in his opinion the national interest would likely be furthered by such acquisition.

(3) Upon service of any notice pursuant to subsections (1) and (2) above, the person to whom the notice is addressed shall deliver up or cause to be delivered up to the Director all ancient monuments and antiquities in his possession, custody or control.

(4) Any person who contravenes subsection (3) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment, and in addition, the ancient monument or antiquity shall be forfeited to the State.

41.-(1) Upon any acquisition under section 40 (1), the Director may pay to the person who had registered possession, custody or control of the ancient monument or antiquity such sum of money by way of reasonable compensation as the parties may agree to:

Compensation
in certain cases
of acquisition.

Provided that the Director shall in his absolute discretion be first satisfied that -

- (a) the person had exercised a substantial measure of possession, custody or control over such ancient monument or antiquity; and
- (b) the person had suffered financial loss arising directly out of or in connection with the actual acquisition by the State of the possession of the ancient monument or antiquity; or

- (c) the person had during the period of five years immediately preceding the date of the service of the notice of acquisition under section 40 (1), expended sums of money by way of maintenance or preservation or improvement of the ancient **monument** or antiquity.

(2) Where the parties fail to agree on the amount of compensation to be paid under subsection (1), the matter of the amount to be paid by way of reasonable compensation shall be referred by the Director to a single arbitrator appointed by the Director, whose award shall be final and binding upon the parties.

CAP. 125.

(3) The Arbitration Act shall have no application to any arbitration pursuant to any reference to an arbitrator under subsection (2) above.

(4) No payment or award by way of reasonable compensation under this section shall take account of any market or other commercial valuation of any ancient monument or antiquity or any question of prospective or future loss of any description by any person.

Application for
licences.

42. Any person in possession or who has custody or control of any ancient monument or antiquity may at any time after his registration of such ancient monument or antiquity pursuant to section 39, and provided that no notice of acquisition pursuant to section 40 has been served upon him, or in any other case, apply to the Director for a licence in the prescribed form to keep the ancient monument or antiquity in his possession, custody or control.

Granting and
revocation of
licences.

43.-(1) The granting or withholding of any licence to keep the possession, custody or control of any ancient monument or antiquity shall be in the absolute discretion of the Director.

(2) Any such licence may be revoked by the Director in his absolute discretion at any time and for any reason by notice in the prescribed form addressed to and served upon the licensee.

(3) Upon service of any notice of revocation pursuant to subsection (2), the ancient monument or antiquity the subject of such notice shall be deemed to be acquired in the national interest and section 40 (3) and (4) and section 41 shall apply to such ancient monument or antiquity.

44.-(1) No person shall sell, transfer or otherwise part with any licence or permit granted to him under the provisions of this Part.

Restriction on transfer of licence or permit or alienation by licence.

(2) No person shall give, sell, transfer or otherwise part with the possession, custody or control of any ancient monument or antiquity of which he is a licensee except with the prior consent in writing of the Director and upon delivery to the Director of his licence.

(3) Where the Director has given his consent under subsection (2), any person to whom the licensee has parted with his possession, custody or control of the ancient monument or antiquity shall apply to the Director for a licence in the prescribed form to keep such ancient monument or antiquity in his possession, custody or control.

(4) Any person who contravenes this section commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term of two years, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment.

45. If any person finds any ancient monument or antiquity, he shall within fourteen days of such finding report the details of the finding to the Director.

Report of finding.

46. Any person who contravenes section 45 commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment, and in addition, any such ancient monument or antiquity in the possession, custody or control of the finder shall be forfeited to the State.

Offence and penalty.

47. If the Director, after inspecting the ancient monument or antiquity so found, decides that the national interest would be likely furthered by acquiring

Acquisition of finds by State.

possession of such ancient monument or antiquity, he shall report the same to the Minister, who may acquire the ancient monument or antiquity by Order published in the *Gazette*.

Reward to finders.

48. Upon any acquisition pursuant to section 47, the Minister in his absolute discretion may award to the finder of the ancient monument or antiquity such sum of money, if any, as may seem just and equitable in all the circumstances.

Grant of permits.

49. Subject to this Act and to any regulations made hereunder, the Director may in his absolute discretion grant permits in the prescribed form:-

- (a) to any suitable person or group of persons to enter upon any specified lands or in any river, stream or watercourse or under the territorial waters of Belize where ancient monuments or antiquities are or may be situated to search for and explore or excavate such ancient monuments or antiquities therefrom subject to such conditions as he may specify therein; or
- (b) to any suitable person or group of persons to consolidate and/or restore ancient monuments subject to such conditions as the Director may specify; or
- (c) to any occupier of land to demolish for agricultural or other industrial reasons an ancient monument situated on the occupier's land subject to such conditions as he may specify therein.

Land owner's consent to issue of permit.

50. A permit to be exercised on private land shall not be issued without the consent of the owner, occupier, or lessee of the land unless:-

- (a) the name and address of the owner, occupier, or lessee of the land is unknown and continues to remain unknown to the Director after he has advertised for this information in at least one newspaper published in Belize and in the *Gazette* and

fifteen days have elapsed since the last publication of the advertisement; or

- (b) the owner, occupier or lessee of the land neglects or refuses to furnish to the Director his views on an application for a permit upon the Director requesting him to do so, provided that fourteen days shall have elapsed since the Director posted such a letter addressed to the owner, occupier or lessee of the land containing a notice that if by the end of such period the Director has not received any such views from the owner, occupier or lessee of the land he would proceed to consider the application for a permit; or
- (c) the Director is satisfied that the granting of a permit is necessary for cultural or scientific or salvage reasons and that the owner, occupier or lessee of the land has unreasonably withheld his consent.

51. Any person who in the exercise of any rights granted under a permit issued pursuant to section 49 (a) removes any ancient monument or antiquity from the specified land shall within three days of such removal report the details of the removal to the Director.

Report of
removals by
permittee.

52. Any person who contravenes section 51 commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment, and in addition, any such ancient monument or antiquity shall be forfeited to the State.

Offence and
penalty.

53. On every grant or lease of national lands, it shall be an implied condition that there shall be specifically reserved to the State all rights of ownership in any ancient monument or antiquity which is found in or upon lands so granted or leased.

Reservation in
State grant or
lease.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Power of entry on lands granted or leased by State. | 54. The Director, or any person authorised by him in writing for that purpose, may at any time enter upon lands granted or leased by the State, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, where the grant or lease of such lands was made subject to any reservation clause such as that provided for in section 53. |
| Power of entry, etc., on other lands. | 55.-(1) Subject to subsection (2), the Director, or any person authorised by him in writing for that purpose, may enter upon any land for the purpose inspecting, searching for and locating any ancient monument or antiquity that may be in or upon such land. (2) The Director shall, before exercising his power under subsection (1), give reasonable notice to the owner or occupier of the land of his intention to enter upon the land for the purposes mentioned in subsection (1). |
| Prohibition on trade, etc., without licence. | 56.-(1) No person shall import, export, sell, or trade in any manner in ancient monuments or antiquities or attempt to do so without a licence in writing granted by the Board in the prescribed form. (2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and notwithstanding any punishment otherwise provided in this Act, upon conviction, any such ancient monument or antiquity and any vehicle or other article whatsoever used in such importation, exportation, sale or trade or attempt shall be liable to forfeiture to the State. |
| Power to enter and search premises, to stop and search persons, vehicles, etc. | 57.-(1) It shall be lawful for the Director, with the written approval of the Board, or any person authorised by the Board in writing for that purpose, or any police officer having a warrant issued by a magistrate, at any time of day or night to enter upon premises wherein he has reasonable cause to suspect that any ancient monuments or antiquities may be found which have been obtained or are being possessed unlawfully and to seize therefrom any such ancient monuments or antiquities. |

(2) The Director, or any person authorised by him in writing for that purpose or any police officer shall have the right to stop and search any person, vehicle, vessel or aircraft or any carrier, who or which he has reasonable cause to suspect of carrying or being used to carry any ancient monuments or antiquities which have been obtained or are being possessed unlawfully and to seize therefrom any such ancient monuments or antiquities.

(3) Any ancient monuments or antiquities seized under subsections (1) and (2) shall be forfeited to the State unless and until a restoration order has been made by a court of summary jurisdiction which finds that such ancient monuments or antiquities were lawfully obtained or possessed, the onus of proof whereof shall lie upon the person who claims that such ancient monuments or antiquities were lawfully obtained or possessed.

58. Any person who obstructs, molests or hinders in any manner any other person in the exercise of the powers conferred by section 54, 55, or 57 commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months or to both such fine and term of imprisonment.

Obstruction,
etc., of officers.

59. The Minister, on the recommendation of the Board, may by Order published in the *Gazette* declare-

Declaration of
archaeological
reserves.

- (a) any area of unalienated national land containing or adjacent to an ancient monument to be an Archaeological Reserve;
- (b) any area of alienated national land, title to which has reverted to the State, containing or adjacent to an ancient monument to be an Archaeological Reserve;
- (c) any ancient monument acquired by the Director or the Minister pursuant to section 40 (1) or (2) or to section 43 (3) or to section 47, together with any land adjacent thereto, to be an

Archaeological Reserve.

Acquisition of
land adjacent to
acquired ancient
monuments.
CAP. 184.

60. In the case of any Order pursuant to section 59(c) which includes any land adjacent to any ancient monument, no such Order shall have effect unless and until the provisions of the Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Act have been complied with in respect of such adjacent land.

Prohibition of
removal of earth
or stone.

61.-(1) Subject to subsection (2), no person shall remove any earth or stone from any ancient monument except under a permit in the prescribed form issued by the Director.

(2) This section shall not apply to any person or group of persons holding a permit granted by the Director under section 49 in so far as they transfer debris or spoil within the specified land as part of their operations.

(3) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment..

Damage or
destruction of
monuments.

62.-(1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, any person who:-

- (a) wilfully damages, destroys or disturbs any ancient monument or in any way marks or defaces any ancient monument; or
- (b) wilfully removes any antiquity from any ancient monument or destroys any such antiquity,

commits of an offence.

(2) Any person who wilfully causes or induces or attempts to cause or induce any other person to commit an offence under this Part or who knowingly aids and abets any other person in the commission of any such offence also commits an offence.

63.-(1) The Director may direct any land owner, lessee, concessionaire, contractor or any other person who is about to engage in any operation which in the opinion of the Director is liable to destroy, damage, interfere with or otherwise be to the detriment of any ancient monument or antiquity:-

Control of land operations.

- (a) not to proceed with any operation until the Director shall have had an archaeological exploration and survey carried out; and
- (b) to take or to refrain or desist from taking any such action as part of the operation as the Director may decide to be fair and reasonable for the proper protection of the ancient monument or antiquity.

(2) Any person who contravenes any direction in writing of the Director under subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment.

64. In any proceedings for an offence under this Part, the production of a certificate signed by the Director shall be sufficient evidence of the facts therein stated in respect of the age or archaeological source of any ancient monument or antiquity without proof of his signature or official capacity, unless the defence requires that he be called as a witness.

Evidence by certificate.

65.-(1) Where any person is convicted of an offence under this Part and the court by which such person is convicted finds that any aircraft, vessel or vehicle was used or employed by such person in the commission of the offence of which he is convicted, such aircraft, vessel, or vehicle may be forfeited to the State.

Forfeiture.

(2) The owner of any aircraft, vessel or vehicle forfeited under subsection (1) shall have the rights of appeal of an accused person.

(3) For the purpose of this section, “aircraft”, vessel” and “vehicle” respectively include everything contained in, being on or attached to any aircraft, vessel or vehicle which in the opinion of the court forms part of the equipment of such aircraft, vessel, or vehicle.

Offences and penalties.

66.-(1) Every person found guilty of an offence against the provisions of section 44, 56 or 62 shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment.

(2) It shall be within the discretion of the Director of Public Prosecutions whether an offence against the provisions of section 44, 56, or 62 shall be prosecuted summarily or on indictment.

Archaeological reserves entrusted to Minister responsible for Tourism.

67. The Minister, after consultation with the Director, may by Order published in the *Gazette* specify the archaeological Reserves or parts thereof which shall by that Order be entrusted to the care and control of the Minister responsible for Tourism for the purpose of having such reserves visited by the public.

Rules and limitations for such reserves.

68. The Minister responsible for Tourism may make rules governing such reserves as are entrusted to him under section 67 in respect of when and under what conditions as to charges or otherwise they shall be open to the public, regulations relating to sanitation and safety measures, the appointment and duties of wardens and caretakers and generally for all matters of their general management, and may specify penalties for any breaches of such rules recoverable on summary conviction thereof:

Provided that if at any time the Director should determine that all or any part of such reserve is required for excavation or research purposes by employees of IRMAC or any person holding a permit under section 49, he shall indicate the same to the Minister responsible for Tourism who shall, in accordance with the recommendations of the Director, restrict the access of the public to such areas and otherwise enforce the regulations necessary to

allow such excavation or research to take place:

Provided further that no attempt shall be made to restore, repair or otherwise affect the structures of any such reserves without the approval and the supervision of such work by the Director.

69. The Minister may, after consultation with the Director, by regulations:- Regulations.

- (a) prescribe any forms of licences, notices, permits or other documents required to be prescribed under this Part;
- (b) prescribe the charging or levying of any fees in respect of the grant or issue of any licence or permit under this Part or their waiver in specified circumstances and for their collection and recovery;
- (c) prescribe the keeping and contents of such registers, records or other books or documents by the Director as may seem necessary for the proper carrying out of any of the provisions of this Act;
- (d) prescribe the manner in which and the place to which any finder or the grantee of any permit shall carry any ancient monument or antiquity found or discovered by him;
- (e) prescribe the manner in which any ancient monument or antiquity the possession of which has been acquired by the Director or the Minister under this Act shall thenceforth be disposed of or dealt with;
- (f) prescribe the manner in which any ancient monument or antiquity seized or forfeited under this Part shall thenceforth be disposed of or dealt with;
- (g) make any other provisions as may seem necessary for the

further and better carrying out of any of the provisions of this Act;

- (h) provide for the protection of the collections held by IRMAC, whether or not they are ancient monuments or antiquities and for their restoration, sale, exchange, loan or otherwise; and
- (i) provide that the contravention of any of the provisions of any regulations made pursuant to this section shall be an offence punishable on summary conviction and impose penalties in respect of any such offence being fines not exceeding five thousand dollars.

Repeal of
Ancient
Monument and
Antiquities Act.
CAP. 330.

70.-(1) The Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act shall stand repealed upon the coming into force of this Act.

(2) All such things as were done under the repealed Act shall have effect, *mutatis mutandis*, as if they were done under this Act.

(3) Any reference to the repealed Act in any other law, regulation or instrument shall be read and construed a reference to this Act.

(4) All regulations, rules, by-laws and other subsidiary legislation made under the repealed Act shall continue in force after the commencement of this Act to such an extent as they are not inconsistent with the provisions hereof, until repealed or revoked by regulations, rules, by-laws, or other subsidiary legislation made hereunder.

PART VII

Institute for Social and Cultural Research

Establishment of
the ISCR.

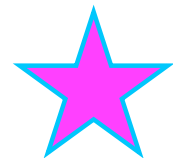
71. There shall be established as a division of the Institute, a body to be called the Institute for Social and Cultural Research, referred to in this Act as

“ISCR”.

72. The ISCR shall be responsible for:-

Functions of
the ISCR.

- (a) conducting and supervising the carrying out of historical, socio-economic, cultural and anthropological research;
- (b) publishing and disseminating such research both in Belize and abroad;
- (c) collecting and cataloging any and all social and cultural research on Belize;
- (d) training researchers, both in Belize and elsewhere;
- (e) holding symposia, seminars and workshops in furtherance of its duties under this Act;
- (f) undertaking joint research projects with local and other regional and international organizations; and
- (g) establishing a unit for research of languages used in Belize and for language training.



73. There shall be a Director of the ISCR who shall be a suitably qualified Belizean citizen appointed by the President subject to the approval of the Minister under such terms and conditions as may be approved by the Minister.

Director of the
ISCR.

74. The Director of the ISCR shall, subject to the approval of the President, appoint such other staff as may be necessary for carrying out the functions of the ISCR.

Other Staff.

75.-(1) It shall be the duty of the Chairman of any Commission or Committee of Inquiry established under any law to enquire into a matter of public importance

Records to be
transmitted to
the ISCR.

to deposit all records relating to such Commission or Committee, as the case may be, at the ISCR within one month after the rendering of the final report of such Commission or Committee, as the case may be.

(2) It shall be the duty of the Mayor of any local authority in Belize, and of the Chairman of any public corporation, statutory body or similar institution, to furnish the ISCR with two copies of every published report referring to his institution within one month after such report has been published.

(3) It shall be the duty of every Permanent Secretary of a Ministry of Government and every head of department of Government to furnish the ISCR with two copies of every published report of the Ministry or Department within one month after such report has been published.

(4) It shall be the duty of the Clerk of the National Assembly to furnish to the ISCR one copy of all papers tabled in the House of Representatives and of all audio tapes of House proceedings and transcripts thereof, including records of public hearings of Committees, within one month after they become available to him.

(5) It shall be the duty of the publisher of any book, newspaper, periodical, journal, novel or any other matter published in Belize for public sale or distribution to furnish the ISCR with two copies of the same within one month after such publication.

(6) In this section, the words “records” or “publications” and their grammatical derivatives shall include matters recorded or communicated by whatever means, including print, audio, video, computer disc, laser or any other technology.

PART VIII

Institute of Creative Arts

76. In this Part, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Director” means the Director of the Institute of Creative Arts appointed under section 78 of this Act;

Interpretation
of words and
phrases used
in this Part.

“Institute” or “ICA” means the Institute of Creative Arts established under section 77 of this Act.

77. There shall be established as a division of the Institute, a body to be known as the Institute of Creative Arts responsible for the promotion of the creative arts.

Establishment
of the ICA.

78. There shall be a Director of the ICA who shall be a suitably qualified Belizean citizen appointed by the President subject to the approval of the Minister under such terms and conditions as may be approved by the Minister.

Director of the
ICA.

79. The Director of the ICA shall, subject to the approval of the President, appoint such other staff as may be necessary for carrying out the functions of the ICA.

Other staff.

80. The objects and functions of the ICA shall be as follows:-

Objects and
functions of
the ICA.

- (a) to encourage the expression, development and preservation of Belizean culture in all its aspects and to stimulate research and study of Belizean culture;
- (b) to encourage, in cooperation with other organizations, the attainment of excellence in all forms of Belizean art;
- (c) to promote, develop and improve the knowledge and practice

of all forms of creative activity;

- (d) to foster, support or undertake, in cooperation with other bodies, the development of cultural and artistic activity;
- (e) to develop training programmes which shall include the training of administrative and creative personnel for the various areas of Belizean culture and the arts;
- (f) to carry out any artistic or culture-related activity for promoting the development in particular of youth and of women in Belize;
- (g) to plan and implement programmes and activities for the strengthening, preservation and development of Belizean cultural traditions and identity;
- (h) to establish and maintain institutions such as cultural centres, art galleries and similar fora and to provide for the holding of performances and cultural and artistic exhibitions;
- (i) to provide a scheme for awards, prizes and recognition generally for the encouragement and development of art and culture in Belize;
- (j) to compile, publish, distribute or disseminate (or assist in so doing) any book, volume or part thereof, or newspaper or other printed material in any medium including television and radio for the dissemination of audio-visual images which in the opinion of the ICA are of cultural, historic or artistic interest and value;
- (k) to encourage the development of cultural and artistic endeavour and activity in all schools in Belize as an integral part of

the curriculum;

- (l) to establish specialized art schools or to encourage and assist the private sector in so doing, taking care to ensure the active participation of the artistic and general community;
- (m) to assist in the establishment and support in each district of associations of young persons interested in the creative arts and to assist those who wish to do so to pursue a career in any of the arts.

81. The ICA shall as soon as practicable establish a branch office in every district of Belize.

Establishment of branch offices in districts.

82.-(1) The ICA shall promote and support the formation in each district of “ICA Committees”, membership of which shall be open to all artistic associations and groups as well as interested individuals.

Promotion of ICA committees in districts.

(2) Such Committees shall regulate their own proceedings.

(3) In decisions affecting a particular district, the ICA shall consult the ICA Committee of that district.

PART IX

Miscellaneous and Transitional Provisions

83. In this section and sections 83 to 91:-

Interpretation.

“previously existing department or body” means, according to the context, one or all of the following, namely:

- (a) the Department of Museums;

(b) the Department of Archaeology;

(c) the National Arts Council; and

“successor body”, in relation to a previously existing department, means:-

(a) in the case of the Department of Museums, the Museum of Belize established by section 30 of this Act;

(b) in the case of the Department of Archaeology, the Institute for the Research and Management of Material Culture, established by section 34 of this Act; and

(c) in the case of the National Arts Council, the Institute of Creative Arts established by section 77 of this Act.

Transfer of
administration
and control of
property.

84.-(1) The administration of all employees and control of all property, rights and assets held by or leased to a previously existing department or body immediately before the coming into force of this Act are hereby vested in the successor body of that previously existing department or body.

(2) Heads of Departments of the previously existing bodies shall, during the transition period, act as the Directors and staff of the relevant successor bodies.

Enforcement of
obligations.

85. All obligations and liabilities incurred by a previously existing department or body and outstanding immediately before the coming into force of this Act are and shall be deemed to have been incurred by the successor body of that previously existing department or body.

Contracts, etc.

86. Every reference to a previously existing department or body in any deed, contract, agreement or other document shall, unless the context otherwise requires, be read as a reference to the successor body of that previously existing department or body.

87.-(1) The President or any of the Directors of the divisions of the Institute may delegate such of their powers and functions as they may determine to any employee of the Institute or of any of the divisions thereof.

Power to
delegate.

(2) Any such delegation shall be revocable by the person who made the delegation, and no delegation shall prevent the exercise by that person of any power or function so delegated.

88. No action, suit, prosecution or other proceedings shall be brought or instituted personally against any member of the Board in respect of any act done *bona fide* in pursuance or execution or intended execution of this Act.

Protection of
members of the
Board.

89. Any summons, notice or other document required or authorised to be served on the Institute under any Act may, unless in any case there is express provision to the contrary, be served by delivering the same to the President or by sending it by registered post addressed to the President at the principal office of the Institute.

Service of
documents.

90.-(1) The President may, after consultation with the Board, make regulations for the purpose of carrying out or giving effect to the principles and provisions of this Act.

Regulations.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the President may make regulations for or in respect of all or any of the following matters:-

- (a) the manner in which the bodies which by section 8 are required to name members of the General Assembly shall so do;
- (b) the requirements and procedures for non-governmental organizations to register with the Institute;
- (c) all matters stated or required in this Act to be prescribed or in respect of which regulations are required or authorized to be

made under this Act; and

- (d) the publication of books or journals by the Institute, and the sale of such books or journals.

(3) All regulations made under this section shall be subject to negative resolution by the National Assembly.

Commencement. 91.-(1) This Act shall come into force on such date as the Minister may, by Order published in the *Gazette*, appoint.

(2) The Minister may appoint different dates for different Parts of this Act to come into effect.



BELIZE

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY ACT CHAPTER 331

REVISED EDITION 2003 **SHOWING THE SUBSIDIARY LAWS AS AT 31ST OCTOBER, 2003**

This is a revised edition of the Subsidiary Laws, prepared by the Law Revision Commissioner under the authority of the Law Revision Act, Chapter 3 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000.

ARRANGEMENT OF SUBSIDIARY LAWS



BELIZE

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY ACT CHAPTER 331

REVISED EDITION 2003 **SHOWING THE SUBSIDIARY LAWS AS AT 31ST OCTOBER, 2003**

This is a revised edition of the Subsidiary Laws, prepared by the Law Revision Commissioner under the authority of the Law Revision Act, Chapter 3 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000.

This edition contains a consolidation of the following laws-

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| 2. | NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY (ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVES) (ADMISSIONS) ORDER | 19-20 |

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CHAPTER 331

14/1972.
58/1973.
5/1980.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(FORMS) REGULATIONS

(Section 69)

[29th April, 1972]

- Title. 1. These Regulations may be cited as the National Institute of Culture and History (Forms) Regulations.
- Forms. 2. The forms contained in the Schedule to these Regulations or forms to the like effect shall be used for the purposes for which they are applicable.

SCHEDULE

FORMS

FORM 1
FORM FOR REGISTRATION OF ANTIQUITIES

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cat. No. Reg. No. | Site No. | District & Country | Department of Archaeology BELIZE |
| Type of specimen | | Period & Phase | |
| | | Associations | |
| Description | Photograph Print Negative | | Drawing Sketch Scale |
| | Acquisition | | |
| Literature on specimen On similar specimen | | Present Location | Comments |

FORM 2

FORM FOR REGISTRATION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS

| | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| Site No. Reg. No. | Site Name | District | Department of Archaeology BELIZE |
| Type of Site | Location and access | | |
| Description | Comments | | |
| Owner and/or Tenant | | | |
| Source of information | | | |
| Literature | Date of recording Recorded by | | |

FORM 3

Licence to Possess Ancient Monument(s)/Antiquity(ies)

Under section 38 (1) of the National Institute of Culture and History Act, Licence No. _____ is granted to _____ of _____ to possess/have in his/her custody or control the following ancient monument(s)/antiquity(ies):

Registered No. _____ in his/her sole possession.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20 ____.

Minister responsible for Antiquities.

N.B.

It should be noted that

- (a) According to section 44 of the above mentioned Act this licence is not transferable;
- (b) According to section 43 (2) of the above mentioned Act this licence may be revoked in the absolute discretion of the Director.

FORM 4

Acquisition of Registered Ancient Monument(s)/Antiquity(ies)

To:

of

Under section 40 (1) of the National Institute of Culture and History Act,
notice is hereby served on _____ of
to deliver ancient monument(s)/antiquity(ies) Registered No. _____
to the Director by _____ 20 ____.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20 ____.

Minister responsible for Antiquities.

FORM 5*Acquisition of Unregistered Ancient Monument(s)/Antiquity(ies)*

To:

Under section 40 (2) of the National Institute of Culture and History Act,
notice is hereby served on _____ of
to deliver ancient monument(s)/antiquity(ies) under his/her possession, custody
or control to the Director by _____ 20 ____.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20 ____.

Minister responsible for Antiquities.

FORM 6

*Application to Acquire Licence to Keep Registered Ancient
Monument (s) and Antiquity(ies)*

I, _____ of _____
hereby apply to the Director under section 42 of the National Institute of Culture
and History Act, to keep ancient monument(s)/antiquity(ies). Registered No. _____
in my possession/custody/control.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____.

Signature of Applicant

FORM 7

Revocation of Licence to Possess Ancient Monument or Antiquity

To: _____

of _____

Under section 43 of the National Institute of Culture and History Act, Licence
No. _____ given to _____ of _____
to possess/have in his custody/control ancient monuments)/antiquity(ies).
Registered No. _____ is hereby revoked.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____.

Minister responsible for Antiquities.

FORM 8

*Permit to search for, explore etc. Ancient Monuments
Antiquities under section 49*

Permit No. is hereby granted to
of to enter the land
specified in the Schedule hereto and * search for and/or excavate and/or
remove *ancient monuments/antiquities which may be situated therein.

This permit shall remain valid until and
shall be subject to conditions hereunder and to compliance by the Grantee
with the Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act.

*The permit has been granted after obtaining the consent of the owner/ occupier/
lessee of the land on which it is to be exercised whose names are appended
hereto.

CONDITIONS

(here set out conditions)

SCHEDULE

(here describe the land)

Dated this day of 20 .

Minister responsible for Antiquities.

*Delete whichever inappropriate.

FORM 9

*Licence to buy/sell Ancient Monuments, Antiquities,
under section 56*

Licence No is hereby given to
to to * buy/sell the following Ancient
Monuments/Antiquities on at

*Type of Item Registration No. Name of buyer/seller**

The parties to the transaction licensed shall take cognisance of the
National Institute of Culture and History Act, in particular section 11.

Dated this day of 20 .

Minister responsible for Antiquities.

FORM 10

Licence to *export/import Ancient Monuments and/or Antiquities under section
56.

Licence No. is given to of 5/1980.
to *export/import the Ancient Monuments
and/or Antiquities described in the form set out in the Schedule hereto. The
*export/import licence shall be subject to the conditions herein stipulated-
(conditions)

SCHEDULE
EXPORT/IMPORT LICENCE
LIST

Project: Licence Number:

Principal Investigator:

| |
|----------------------|
| Institution |
|----------------------|

| |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inspected by: Not valid without Department of Archaeology Stamp |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|

| Container Number | Archaeology Cat. No. | Project Cat. No. | Quantity | Description |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|----------|-------------|
| | | | | |

Page one of

EXPORT/IMPORT LICENCE
LIST

Project: Licence Number:.....
Inspected by

| Container Number | Archaeology Cat. No. | Project Cat. No. | Quantity | Description |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|----------|-------------|
| | | | | |

Page of

FORM 11

58/1973.

Permit to Remove Earth or Stone from Ancient Monument

Under section 61 of the National Institute of Culture and History Act, permit is granted to _____ of _____ to remove earth/stone from Ancient Monument, Registered No. _____ at _____ from _____ to _____.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20 _____.

Director.

N.B.

Under the provisions of section 62 of the above mentioned Act, any person who-

- (a) wilfully damages, destroys or disturbs any ancient monument or in any way marks or defaces any ancient monument; or
- (b) wilfully removes any antiquity from any ancient monument or destroys any such antiquity,

shall be guilty of an offence and upon conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars or to imprisonment for five years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

FORM 12
FORM FOR BOOK OF LICENCES

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|------|----------|-------------|-----------------|---------|----------|
| Entry No. | Date | Reg. No. | Licence No. | To Whom Granted | Address | Comments |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

FORM 13**FORM FOR BOOK OF REGISTRATION OF ANTIQUITIES**

| Entry No. | Date | Reg. No. | Name of Owner | Address | Type of Specimen | Comments |
|-----------|------|----------|---------------|---------|------------------|----------|
| | | | | | | |

FORM 14
FORM FOR BOOK OF REGISTRATION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS

| Entry No. | Date | Reg. No. | Name of Owner/Tenant | Address | Type of Site | Comments |
|-----------|------|----------|----------------------|---------|--------------|----------|
| | | | | | | |

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVES) (ADMISSIONS)
ORDER
(Section 67)**

113/1986.

[6th December, 1986]

1. This Order may be cited as the

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVES) (ADMISSIONS)
ORDER.**

2. The following Mayan sites shall be open to the public each day of the week from 8 a.m. to 5 p. m.

Altun Ha
Xunantunich
Santa Rita
Cerro Maya
Lamanai
Lubaantun
Nim Li Punit

3. Admission to these reserves is as follows:

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Altun Ha | - \$3.00 BZ |
| Xunantunich | - \$3.00 BZ |
| Lamanai | - \$3.00 BZ |
| Santa Rita | - \$2.00 BZ |
| Cerro Maya | - \$2.00 BZ |
| Lubaantun | - \$2.00 BZ |

Nim Li Punit - \$2.00 BZ

for persons over the age of twelve (12).

4. Children twelve (12) years and under are admitted free of charge.
 5. Official passes are issued to schools, and Government officers travelling on duty.
 6. Nationals are admitted free of charge on Sundays. Please note that this does not apply to Public and Bank holidays.
-

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(CERRO MAYA ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE) ORDER
(Section 59)**

33/1976.

[15th May, 1976]

1. This Order may be cited as the

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(CERRO MAYA ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE) ORDER.**

2. The area of alienated Crown Land set out in the Schedule hereto, title to which has reverted to the Crown, shall be an Archaeological Reserve and shall be known as the Cerro Maya Archaeological Reserve.

SCHEDULE

Commencing at a concrete pillar located at the North East Corner of a parcel of land being a portion of Block 71 shown on Plan 612 at the Survey Department, Belmopan; thence in a direction S 16° 40' 45" W for a distance of 879.39 feet to a concrete pillar then in a direction S 66° 53' 35" E for a distance of 536.49 feet to a concrete pillar; thence in a direction S 23° 06' 25" W for a distance of 311.50 feet to a concrete pillar; thence in a direction N 66° 53' 35" W for a distance of 879.52 feet to a concrete pillar; thence in a direction S 55° 42' 45" W for a distance of 1,140.63 feet to a concrete pillar; thence in a direction N 37° 52' 30" W for a distance of 635.68 feet to a concrete pillar; thence in a North Easterly direction along the sea coast, for a distance of approximately 2,000 feet to the concrete pillar at the starting point as shown on a plan dated 28th April 1975 at the General Registry in the Surveyors Plans Book Volume 7 folio 60.

33/1985.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(LAMANAIA RCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE) ORDER
(Section 59)**

[23rd March, 1985]

1. This Order may be cited as the

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(LAMANAIA RCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE) ORDER.**

2. The area of alienated Crown Land set out in the Schedule hereto, title to which has reverted to the Crown, shall be an Archaeological Reserve and shall be known as the Lamanai Archaeological Reserve.

SCHEDULE

ALL THAT PIECE of land lying and being part of Indian Church Work in the Orange Walk District and bounded on the North by Barber Creek, on the East by New River Lagoon, on the South by lands now or formerly the property of B.E.C. and on the West by another part of the said Indian Church Work and containing approximately 958.5 acres surveyed by Government Surveyor L. L. Belisle and shown on Plan No. 1779 lodged in the Survey and Lands Department in Belmopan and being more particularly described as follows-

Commencing at a concrete pillar on the southern boundary of the herein described parcel and having the U.T.M. co-ordinates of northing 1963 298.281 metres; easting 324 640.392 metres; thence Westerly along the Southern

boundary of the herein described parcel on a grid bearing of $306^{\circ} 15' 45''$ for a grid distance of 69.621 metres more or less to another concrete pillar; thence along the said boundary on the said grid bearing $306^{\circ} 15' 45''$ for a grid distance of 775.798 metres more or less to another concrete pillar on the South West corner of the herein described parcel; thence along the Western boundary of the said parcel on a grid bearing $6^{\circ} 00' 02''$ for a grid distance of 2883.569 metres more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a grid bearing of $6^{\circ} 00' 02''$ for a distance of 0.12 metres more or less to a point on the Southern bank of Barber Creek; thence along the said bank down creek for a distance of 2,160 metres more or less to its confluence with the Western limit of New River Lagoon; thence Southerly along the said limit for a distance of 3,685 metres more or less to another point on the Western limit of the said New River Lagoon where the Southern boundary of the herein described parcel when extended Easterly intersects with the said limit of the said Lagoon; thence Westerly along the said southern boundary for a distance of 20.12 metres more or less to the point of commencement.

19/1995.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(CARACOL ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE) ORDER**
[Section 70(4)]

[18th February, 1995.]

Short title.

1. This Order may be cited as the

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(CARACOL ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE) ORDER.**

Declaration of
Caracol as
Archaeological
Reserve.
Schedule.

2. The area of alienated Crown land situate in the Cayo District which is described in the Schedule hereto, the title of which has reverted to the Crown, and which is known as Caracol, is hereby declared to be an Archaeological Reserve.

MADE by the Minister responsible for Ancient Monuments and Antiquities this 3rd day of February, 1995.

SCHEDULE

[Paragraph 2]

CARACOL ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE

All that piece or parcel of land, being the Caracol Site situate in the Cayo District, containing 25,000 Acres approximately and bounded as follows:- On the North, South and East respectively by lands being now or formerly National Lands; and on the west by the Western International boundary line between Belize and Guatemala; and being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the intersection of the international boundary line between Belize and Guatemala, and the scaled Universal Transverse Mercator grid line of 18 60 600 metres Northings, being the Northwestern corner of the here-in described parcel; thence due East for a distance of 8,800 metres approximately to a point having a scaled Universal Transverse Mercator coordinate value of 18 60 600 metres Northings, 278 000 metres Eastings; thence due South for a distance of 11,260 metres approximately to another point having a scaled Universal Transverse Mercator coordinate value of 18 49 450 metres Northings, 2 78 000 metres Eastings; thence in a westerly direction for a distance of 9,800 metres approximately to another point being the intersection of the said international boundary line between Belize and Guatemala and the scaled Universal Transverse Mercator grid line of 18 49 450 metres Northings; thence in a Northeasterly direction for a distance of 11,150 metres approximately, back to the point of commencement.

20 of 1995.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY (NIM LI
PUNIT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE) ORDER**
[Section 70(4)]

[18th February, 1995.]

Short title.

1. This Order may be cited as the

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(NIM LI PUNIT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE) ORDER.**

Declaration of
Nim Li Punit as
Archaeological
Reserve.
Schedule.

2. The area of alienated Crown land situate in the Toledo District which is described in the Schedule hereto, the title of which has reverted to the Crown, and which is known as Nim Li Punit, is hereby declared to be an Archaeological Reserve.

MADE by the Minister responsible for Ancient Monuments and Antiquities this 3rd day of February, 1995.

SCHEDULE

[Paragraph 2]

NIM LI PUNIT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE

All that piece or parcel of land, known as the Nim Li Punit Reserve, being a portion of Beattie Estates, situate approximately 76½ miles on the North Side of the Southern Highway, Toledo District and containing 121.32 Acres, and bounded on the North, East and West by lands being now or formerly National Lands; and on the South by the Southern Highway and being more particularly described as follows:-

Commencing at a concrete pillar along the Northern limit of the Southern Highway, being the Southwestern corner of the here-in described parcel; thence on a bearing of N 35° 41' 15" W for a distance of 4,193.01 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of N 54° 18' 45" E for a distance of 1,175 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of S 35° 41' 15" E for a distance of 4,631.51 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of S 59° 01' 10" W for a distance of 326.09 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of S 69° 31' 20" W for a distance of 510.28 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of N 87° 50' 35" W for a distance of 452.77 feet more or less back to the point of commencement.

21/1995.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(XUNANTUNICH MAYA RUIN SITE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESERVE) ORDER**
[Section 70(4)]

[18th February, 1995.]

Short title.

1. This Order may be cited as the

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(XUNANTUNICH MAYA RUIN SITE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESERVE) ORDER.**

Declaration of
Xunantunich
Maya Ruin Site
as Archaeological Reserve.
Schedule.

2. The area of alienated Crown land situate in the Cayo District which is described in the Schedule hereto, the title of which has reverted to the Crown, and which is known as Xunantunich Maya Ruin Site, is hereby declared to be an Archaeological Reserve.

MADE by the Minister responsible for Ancient Monuments and Antiquities this 3rd day of February, 1995.

SCHEDULE
[Paragraph 2]

**XUNANTUNICH MAYA RUIN SITE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESERVE**

All that piece or parcel of land known as the Xunantunich Maya Ruin Site, situate in the vicinity of San Jose Succotz Village, Cayo District, being Block No. 324 and containing 51.6 Acres, and bounded on the North by a road reserve; on the East by Block No. 323; on the South by Block Nos. 327

and 328; and on the West by a road reserve; vide plan No. 1514 lodged in the office of the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys and being more particularly described as follows:-

Commencing at a post being the Northeastern corner of the herein described parcel, and the Northwestern corner of Block No. 323; thence due South for a distance of 970.2 feet more or less to another post; thence in a westerly direction for a distance of 2,316.6 feet more or less to a point; thence due North for a distance of 970.2 feet more or less to a Pile of Stones; thence due East for a distance of 2,316.6 feet more or less back to the point of commencement.

22/1995.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(CAHAL PECH MAYA RUIN SITE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESERVE) ORDER**
[Section 70(4)]

[18th February, 1995.]

Short title.

1. Order may be cited as the

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(CAHAL PECH MAYA RUIN SITE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESERVE) ORDER.**

Declaration of
Cahal Pech
Maya Ruin Site
as Archaeolo-
gical Reserve.
Schedule.

2. The area of alienated Crown land situate in the Cayo District which is described in the Schedule hereto, the title of which has reverted to the Crown, and which is known as Cahal Pech Maya Ruin Site, is hereby declared to be an Archaeological Reserve.

MADE by the Minister responsible for Ancient Monuments and Antiquities this 3rd day of February, 1995.

SCHEDULE
[Paragraph 2]

**CAHAL PECH MAYA RUIN SITE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE**

All that piece or parcel of land known as the Cahal Pech Maya Ruin Site, situate South of San Ignacio Town, Cayo District, being Block No. 78 and containing 22.39 Acres, and bounded on the North by Block No. 79 and a Block containing 7.13 Acres; on the East by Block No. 80; on the West by Block No. 77; and on the South by lands being now or formerly National

Lands; vide plan No. 1195 lodged in the office of the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys and being more particularly described as follows:-

Commencing at a concrete pillar being the Northeastern corner of the herein described parcel, and the Southeastern corner of Block No. 79; thence due South for a distance of 825.7 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a true bearing of S 88° 45' 22" W for a distance of 1163.3 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence due North for a distance of 851.1 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence due East for a distance of 1163.03 feet more or less, back to the point of commencement.

23/1995.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(SANTA RITA MAYA MOUND ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESERVE) ORDER**
[Section 70(4)]

[18th February, 1995.]

Short title.

1. This Order may be cited as the

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(SANTA RITA MAYA MOUND ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESERVE) ORDER.**

Declaration of
Santa Rita
Maya Mounds
as Archaeolo-
gical Reserve.
Schedule.

2. The area of alienated Crown land situate in the Corozal District which is described in the Schedule hereto, the title of which has reverted to the Crown, and which is known as Santa Rita Maya Mound, is hereby declared to be an Archaeological Reserve.

MADE by the Minister responsible for Ancient Monuments and Antiquities this 3rd day of February, 1995.

SCHEDULE

[Paragraph 2]

SANTA RITA MAYA MOUND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE

All that piece or parcel of land known as the Santa Rita Site, situate in the Corozal District, containing 3.73 Acres, and bounded on the North, South, East and West respectively by a street; vide plan No. 1624, lodged in the office of the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys, Belmopan and being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at a concrete pillar, being the southeastern corner on the herein described parcel; thence on a bearing of N70° 19' 09" W for a distance of 389.78 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of N 30° 16' 5" W for a distance of 15.31 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of N 09° 45' 18" E for a distance of 398.78 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of N 54° 45' 18" E for a distance of 14.14 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of S 80° 14' 42" E for a distance of 124.41 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence in a Southeasterly direction for an arc distance of 149.16 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of S 37° 35' 22" E for a distance of 97.17 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of S 34° 41' 55" E for a distance of 60.44 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of S 13° 41' 32" E for a distance of 36.36 feet more or less to another concrete pillar; thence on a bearing of S 10° 36' 34" W for a distance of 292.39 feet more or less back to the point of commencement.

123/1995.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(ALTUN HA ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE) ORDER
[Section 70(4)]**

[2nd December, 1995.]

Short title.

1. This Order may be cited as the

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(ALTUN HA ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE) ORDER.**

Declaration of
Altun Ha as
Archaeological
Reserve.
Schedule.

2. The area of unalienated National land situate in the Belize District which is described in the Schedule hereto and is known as Altun Ha, is hereby declared to be an Archaeological Reserve.

MADE by the Minister responsible for Ancient Monuments and Antiquities this 28th day of November, 1995.

**SCHEDULE
[Paragraph 2]**

ALTUN HA ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE

All that piece or parcel of land, being the Altun Ha site situated in the Belize District containing 44 acres approximately and bounded as follows; on the North, East and West by land being now or formerly private property and on the South by lands now or formerly the Rock Stone Pond village site, and being more particularly described as follows:-

Commencing at a post being the southwest corner of the herein described parcel, thence due east for a distance of 660 feet more or less to another post; thence in a northerly direction for a distance of 2904 feet more or less to a point; thence due west for a distance of 660 feet more or less; thence due south for a distance of 2904 feet more or less back to the point of commencement.

54/1998.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(EL PILAR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE FOR MAYA FLORA
AND FAUNA) ORDER**
[Section 70(4)]

[23rd May, 1998.]

Short title.

1. This Order may be cited as the

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURE AND HISTORY
(EL PILAR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE FOR MAYA
FLORA AND FAUNA) ORDER.**

Declaration of
El Pilar for
Maya Flora and
Fauna as
Archaeological
Reserve.
Schedule.

2. The area of unalienated National Land situate in the Cayo District which is described in the Schedule hereto and known as El Pilar is hereby declared to be an Archaeological Reserve.

MADE by the Minister responsible for Ancient Monuments and Antiquities this 12th day of May, 1998.

SCHEDULE
[Paragraph 2]

All that piece or parcel of land known as El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for Maya Flora and Fauna containing ± 808 ha (1,997 acres) that is situated in the area of Fowler's Work in the vicinity of Pilar Camp, which is between 6 and 8.5 miles North from Bullet Tree Falls along the Pilar Road. The parcel being now National Lands, vide plan of location, lodged in the office of the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys, Belmopan, and being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the western border of Belize near UTM Coordinate 19-07-180N/2-71-190E, being the southwest corner of the herein described parcel, thence along grid bearing $27^{\circ} 08' 00'' \pm 120$ m to concrete pillar AF4 thence for 630.29 m to El Pilar Reserve South Boundary Marker SBMI, having UTM Coordinate 19-07-180N/2-71-933E¹, adjacent to the south ceiba tree, thence following the same UTM grid line 19-07-180N across the Pilar Rd, 2,090.25 m to the southeast corner concrete pillar Z22 at UTM Coordinate 2-74-023E/19-07-180N, thence on a grid bearing of $00^{\circ} 08' 00''$ for a distance of 2,854.04 m to another concrete pillar GP7 being the northeast corner at UTM Coordinate 2-74-023E/19-10-034N, thence on a grid bearing $279^{\circ} 08' 15''$ for a distance of 2711.73 m towards the north ceiba tree, across the Pilar Rd to another concrete pillar GC5 and continuing along the same bearing ± 140 m to the northwest corner at the western border of Belize, thence along the western border of Belize south $\pm 3,300$ m back to the point of commencement.

EXCLUDING the following portion of land containing ± 62 ha ± 154 acres: Commencing at concrete pillar C13' having the UTM Coordinate 2-74-023E/ 19-08-316N along the eastern boundary of the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for Maya Flora and Fauna, thence along that portion of the Stratton Lease (No. 1879/86)² to concrete pillars 9, 12, 12D, as shown on entry n°. 1952 Reg. 1, to concrete pillar C15', having the UTM Coordinate 2-74-023E/19-08-881N, being another concrete pillar along the east boundary of the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for Maya Flora and Fauna, thence south $180^{\circ} 08' 00''$ back to the point of commencement.

1. UTM grid coordinate determined by Cayo Survey Department traverse and solar observation on 24 February 1995.
2. Stratton Lease N° 1879/86 was approved 3 March 1994 and registered under entry No 1952.

BELIZE:

NATIONAL PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM ACT, 2015

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

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3. Application and Scope of Act.
4. Extent of the National Protected Areas System.

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SCHEDULE



No. 17 of 2015

I assent,

(SIR COLVILLE N. YOUNG)

Governor-General

21st October, 2015.

AN ACT to provide for the maintenance of coordinated management of a system of protected areas that is representative of internationally agreed categories, effectively managed, ecologically based, consistent with international law, and based on best available scientific information and the principles of sustainable development for the economic, social and environmental benefit of present and future generations of Belize; to repeal the National Parks System Act, Chapter 215 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; to amend the Fisheries Act, Chapter 210 and the Forests Act, Chapter 213 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

(Gazetted 24th October, 2015)

BE IT ENACTED by and with the advice and consent of the House of Representatives and Senate of Belize, and by the authority of the same, as follows

PART I

Preliminary

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as the

NATIONAL PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM ACT, 2015.

Interpretation.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires

CAP. 331.

“archaeological reserve” means an area of land declared as an archaeological reserve under section 59 of the National Institute of Culture and History Act;

“authorized officer” means any person appointed or otherwise authorized to enforce the provisions of

(a) this Act, as protected area park officer or otherwise;

(b) the Forests Act, as forest officer or otherwise;

(c) the Fisheries Act, as fisheries officer or otherwise,

and includes a police officer and customs officer, duly acting as such;

“biological corridor” means a geographically defined area that provides connectivity between landscapes, ecosystems and habitats, natural or modified, and ensures the maintenance of biodiversity and ecological and evolutionary processes;.

“co-managing entity” means a conservation organization appointed to co-manage a public protected area under this Act;

“conservation organization” means

- (a) a company that is registered under the Companies Act as a non-profit company, or CAP. 250.
- (b) a group of persons including a community based organization,

having as its principal object the promotion or encouragement of the carrying out of any conservation purpose in relation to land, sea or freshwater generally or to any particular land, sea or freshwater or particular kind of land, sea or freshwater;

“conservation purpose” includes any one or more measures to -

- (a) protect ecologically viable areas representative of both Belize’s biological diversity and its natural landscapes or seascapes in a system of protected areas;
- (b) preserve the ecological integrity of areas described in;
- (c) conserve biodiversity in areas described in paragraph (a);
- (d) protect areas representative of all ecosystems, habitats and species naturally occurring in Belize;
- (e) protect Belize’s threatened or rare species;

- (f) protect an area which is vulnerable or ecologically sensitive;
- (g) assist in ensuring the sustained supply of environmental goods and services; or
- (h) rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems and promote the recovery of endangered and vulnerable species;

“Council” means the National Protected Areas Advisory Council, established under section 9;

“fish” means to take, kill or attempt to take or kill any aquatic organism;

CAP. 213. “forest reserve” means the same as in the Forests Act;

“hunt” means to kill, take, or molest by any method and includes attempting to kill, take or molest by any method species of wildlife;

“managing entity” means the conservation organization, body or individual responsible for the management of a private protected area;

CAP. 210. “marine reserve” means an area of land and sea declared as a marine reserve under section 14 (1) of the Fisheries Act or any equivalent statutory provision that may replace that provision;

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for the National Protected Areas System;

“national park” means any area established as a national park in accordance with the provisions of section 33 for the protection and preservation of natural and scenic values of a national significance for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public;

“nature reserve” means any area reserved as a scientific reserve in accordance with the provisions of section 33 for the protection of nature, be it biological communities or species and to maintain natural processes in an undisturbed state in order to have ecologically representative examples of the natural environment available for scientific study, monitoring, education and the maintenance of genetic resources;

“natural monument” means any area reserved for the protection and preservation of nationally significant natural features of special interest or unique characteristics to provide opportunities for interpretation, education, research and public appreciation;

“NGO” means a non-governmental organisation registered under the Non-Governmental Organisations Act;

CAP. 315.

“National Protected Areas System” means the National Protected Areas System established under section 4;

“National Protected Areas System Plan” has the meaning given in section 6;

“PACT” means the Protected Areas Conservation Trust established under section 3 of the Protected Areas Conservation Trust Act;

CAP. 218.

“private land” means land including cayes or parts thereof owned by or leased to any private person or body of persons, including collectively held land;

“private protected area” means any private land declared to be a protected area under this Act;

“protected area” means an area, falling within any classification specified in section 8, and declared as so classified whether pursuant to this Act, the Forests Act, the Fisheries Act or the National Institute of Culture and History

Act or any statutory modifications thereof for the time being in force;

“protected area offence” means an offence in contravention of this Act, the Fisheries Act, the Forests Act or the National Parks System Act (repealed hereunder);

“protected area park officer” means a person appointed to be a park officer for the purposes of this Act;

“protected landscape” and “protected seascape” mean respectively an area declared as a protected landscape or an area declared as a protected seascape, because of

- (a) its distinct character with significant ecological, biological, scenic value, and
- (b) the fact that safeguarding the integrity of the interaction of humans and nature is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values;

“public managing entity” means the Forest Department and the Fisheries Department;

“scenic landscape of geomorphic significance” means pleasing views of the natural features of an area of land, including

- (a) physical elements of landforms, such as mountains and hills, water bodies such as rivers, lakes, ponds and the sea;
- (b) living elements of land including indigenous vegetation;

- (c) human elements including different forms of land use;
- (d) transitory elements such as lighting and weather conditions; and
- (e) the scientific study of these landforms and the processes that shape them;

“spawning aggregation site” means the place where important aquatic and terrestrial species of animals congregate to engage in reproductive activities and which is declared as such under the Fisheries Act;

“special management area” means an area so declared under this Act for the protection of biological corridors, critical nesting, roosting or congregation areas requiring active management;

“wildlife” means all undomesticated mammals, birds and reptiles, amphibians, fish and all parts, eggs and nests of any of these life forms;

“wildlife sanctuary” includes a Wildlife Sanctuary 1 and Wildlife Sanctuary 2, except where otherwise stated;

“Wildlife Sanctuary 1” means any area reserved as a nature reserve under this Act for the protection of nationally significant species, groups of species, biotic communities or physical features of the environment requiring specific human manipulation for their perpetuation;

“Wildlife Sanctuary 2” shall be similarly construed as “Wildlife Sanctuary 1”, except that established traditional community use, including harvesting on the basis of a sustainable use plan, is permitted.

Application
and scope of
Act.

3. Except where otherwise stated, this Act shall not apply –

- (a) in relation to any archaeological reserve or ancient monument or antiquity, the care or control or management of which is regulated under the National Institute of Culture and History Act; or
- (b) in relation to any such archaeological reserve or ancient monument or antiquity, in any manner inconsistent with regulation under the National Institute of Culture and History Act.

Extent of
National
Protected
Areas System.

4. All protected areas are hereby established collectively as the National Protected Areas System.

PART II

Objective and National Policy on Protected Areas

Objectives of
Act.

5. The objectives of this Act are to–

- (a) establish a national protected areas system;
- (b) promote long-term conservation, management, and sustainable use of Belize's protected areas;
- (c) promote conservation of ecologically viable areas representative of Belize's biological diversity and its natural landscapes and seascapes;
- (d) ensure maintenance of genetic diversity and the diversity of species and habitats within these areas, including but not limited to

threatened species and species of economic, social or cultural value;

- (e) ensure sustenance of the provision of ecosystem goods and services important for national development, including but not limited to timber and non-timber forest products, fish and other marine resources, genetic resources, water catchment services, removal of pollutants, soil regeneration, pollination, carbon storage, resilience and adaptability to climate change, protection against natural disasters, and natural environmental features of touristic, recreational, cultural or spiritual value;
- (f) promote the strengthening of coordination and collaboration between nature-based protected areas, and archaeological reserves, where deemed necessary.

6. (1) The Minister may develop policies and plans for the National Protected Areas System to-

Policies and plans.

- (a) implement legislation and regulations for the National Protected Areas System; and
- (b) update the National Protected Areas System Plan, as needed, and in any event at intervals of no longer than five years, and present it to the Cabinet for approval.

(2) In subsection (1) “National Protected Areas System Plan” means the national plan for the development of protected areas prepared by the National Protected Areas Advisory Council.

7. In discharging the duties assigned under this Act, the Minister shall-

Principles and measures.

- (a) safeguard for all Belizeans, safe, healthy, productive, aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings by preserving important aesthetic and natural aspects of Belize's natural heritage classified as protected areas;
- (b) enhance national pride in and encourage stewardship of Belize's natural heritage at the national, regional, local, community and individual levels of society;
- (c) promote the widest range of beneficial uses of biodiversity without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences in order to provide for sustainable economic development;
- (d) promote a balance between population and biodiversity resource use which will permit a higher standard of living and the conservation of natural resources for future generations;
- (e) enhance the quality of renewable resources and strive for the optimum use of non-renewable resources; and
- (f) have regard to Belize's commitments under the-
 - (i) United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity;
 - (ii) United Nations Climate Change Convention;
 - (iii) United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

- (iv) Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat;
- (v) The Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species;
- (vi) UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

PART III

Classification of Protected Areas

8. -(1) Protected areas shall be classified as follows:

**Classification
of protected
area.**

- (a) national park;
- (b) nature reserve;
- (c) wildlife sanctuary 1;
- (d) wildlife sanctuary 2;
- (e) natural monument;
- (f) forest reserve;
- (g) marine reserve;
- (h) archaeological reserve;
- (i) private protected area;
- (j) protected landscape or protected seascape;
- (k) spawning aggregation site;
- (l) special management area;
- (m) scenic landscape of geomorphic significance.

(2) The Minister may, by Order published in the *Gazette*, amend or revise the classification of protected areas as set out in subsection (1), however, in so doing, the Minister shall ensure that any amended or revised classification of protected areas shall be consistent with internationally accepted standards and guidelines for applying protected areas management categories.

Re-
classification
of protected
area.

9. The re-classification of a protected area shall take into consideration

- (a) socio-economic aspects;
- (b) general environmental situations, such as ecosystems and species of concern; and
- (c) potential impact or any other factor of concern.

PART IV

National Protected Areas Advisory Council

Establishment
of National
Protected
Areas Advisory
Council.

10. There is hereby established for the purposes of this Act an advisory body to be called the National Protected Areas Advisory Council, in this Act called the “Council”.

Functions of
the Council.

11. (1) The Council is established to advise the Minister on

- (a) the development of partnerships with co-managers and stakeholders for participatory protected areas management;
- (b) the development of the necessary tools and framework for multi-disciplinary capacity development for protected areas management;

- (c) the development of appropriate human resource capacity for managing the National Protected Areas System; and
- (d) the efficient and effective coordination with other governmental bodies to minimize conflict and address issues pertaining to protected areas;
- (e) Belize's obligations under international and regional conventions relating to the National Protected Areas System;
- (f) matters pertaining to the illegal trans-boundary incursions into the National Protected Areas System; and
- (g) effective and strategic ways in which to strengthen the coordination and collaboration for the management of nature-based protected areas and culture-based protected areas, such as the Archaeological Reserves, where deemed necessary.

(2) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, the Council shall

- (a) advise on the maintenance and extension of the National Protected Areas System, in particular, by including underrepresented ecosystems in the National Protected Areas System, in accordance with the approved process or mechanism and criteria for declaration, classification, modification, category re-classification, management and de-reservation of private and public marine and terrestrial protected areas;

- (b) assess whether areas proposed as Private protected areas meet the criteria for participation in the National Protected Areas System and advise the Minister accordingly;
- (c) discharge such other advisory functions generally or relating to the National Protected Areas System as may be assigned to it by the Minister under this Act.

Appointment
and
membership of
the Council.

12.- (1) The membership of the Council shall consist of the following persons, namely

- (a) the person appointed by the Minister, under subsection (4), as Chairman;
- (b) *ex officio* members, being –
 - (i) the Fisheries Administrator;
 - (ii) the Chief Forest Officer;
 - (iii) the Director of the Institute of Archaeology ;
 - (iv) the Executive Director of PACT;
 - (v) the Chief Executive Officer of the Coastal Zone Management Authority;
 - (vi) the Commissioner of Lands;
 - (vii) the Chief Tourism Officer;
- (c) a representative of the largest umbrella organization for non-governmental agencies involved in protected areas management, nominated by the organization;

- (d) a representative of the largest umbrella organization representing private protected areas, nominated by the organization or in the absence of an organization functioning as such, a private protected area landowner selected by the Minister;
- (e) a representative from the University of Belize, nominated by the President of the University of Belize;
- (f) a representative of the National Security Council; and
- (g) a person from the private sector with experience in private sector investment in a natural resource based sector.

(2) The members of the Council, other than the *ex officio* members shall be appointed by the Minister.

(3) The members other than *ex officio* members shall be appointed for a period of two years and shall be eligible for reappointment.

(4) The Minister shall appoint a person, other than any specified in paragraphs (b) to (g) of subsection (1) to be Chairman of the Council who shall serve for a period of two years but shall be eligible for reappointment.

(5) Six members, including the Chairman, shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the Council and in the event of an equality of votes, the person presiding at that meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

13. The Minister may, from time to time, appoint or engage experts or persons having technical or special knowledge necessary for the purpose of assisting the Council to discharge its functions under this Act.

Appointment
of experts and
technical
personnel.

PART V

General Provisions for Protected Areas

Conditions to be met prior to declaration and alteration of new protected area.

14.- (1) The declaration of a new protected area, whether under this Act or under any other Act, shall be preceded by

- (a) an integrated assessment of the ecological, social and economic status of the area, potential impacts and contribution to the National Protected Areas System;
- (b) the preparation of a preliminary management plan; and
- (c) any other study, plan or requirement deemed necessary by the Minister.

(2) The alteration or reclassification of any protected area shall be preceded by the carrying out of requirements of paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of subsection (1).

(3) The revocation of the declaration of any protected area shall be preceded by the carrying out of the requirements of paragraphs (a) and (c) of subsection (1).

Power of Minister to declare protected area.

15.- (1) The Minister by Order published in the *Gazette* may declare an area of land in Belize to be a protected area; except for an area of land in Belize that may be so lawfully declared as a protected area, by any other Minister under another enactment.

(2) The Minister may, by Order published in the *Gazette*, declare that from a specified date

- (a) the limits of any protected area shall be altered or varied; and

- (b) any protected area or part thereof shall cease to be a protected area.

(3) The declaration of an area as a protected landscape or protected seascape under paragraph (j) of section 7(1) shall be for such period as the Minister shall approve.

However, the Minister may by notice in the *Gazette* extend that period for a period no less than ten years.

(4) An area ceases to be a protected landscape or protected seascape if that area is declared as, or included in another protected area or part thereof.

16. The Minister may make rules, including providing for offences, regarding a protected landscape or protected seascape, to restrict

Power of Minister to make rules in relation to protected landscape or protected seascape.

- (a) development that may be inappropriate for the area given the purpose for which the area was declared; and
- (b) the carrying out of other activities that may impede such purpose.

17. Before making a declaration of a protected area whether by the Minister under this Act or the appropriate Minister under the Fisheries Act or the Forests Act, the Minister concerned shall seek, and take into consideration, the advice of the Director of the Geology and Petroleum Department and the Head of the Mining Unit as to the petroleum and mineral potential respectively of an area proposed for declaration as a protected area.

Minister to seek advice before making declaration.

18.-(1) Where an area declared as a protected area no longer serves the purpose for which it was declared, the Minister shall by Order published in the *Gazette*, revoke

Revocation of declaration.

the declaration; however, prior to revoking a declaration under this section, the Minister, shall hold such other public consultations with persons having an interest in the area, including users of the area.

(2) Any order made under subsection (1) shall be subject to an affirmative resolution.

Public
consultation
and
participation.

19.- (1) Any declaration, alteration, re-classification or revocation of a declaration, of a protected area, and the preparation of a protected area management plan, shall follow –

- (a) an integrated assessment of the ecological, social and economic status of the area, potential impacts and contribution to the National Protected Areas System; and
- (b) such consultative process as may be appropriate in the circumstances, but must ensure consultation with nearby communities and affected parties of the area and follow a process of public participation in accordance with the requirements of subsection (2).

(2) In accordance with subsection (1), the Minister or the appropriate Minister under the Fisheries Act or the Forests Act shall publish the intention to declare, alter, re-classify or revoke a declaration of a protected area in two of the leading national newspapers and the government *Gazette* and also on air on two national radio stations.

(3) The publication contemplated in the subsection (2) above shall

- (a) invite members of the public and all affected persons to submit to the Minister written representations on or objections to the proposed

notice within 60 days from the date of publication in the *Gazette*; and

- (b) contain sufficient information to enable members of the public to submit meaningful representations or objections, and must include a clear indication of the area that will be affected.

(4) The Minister or other appropriate Minister may in appropriate circumstances allow any interested person to make oral representations or objections.

(5) The Minister or other appropriate Minister shall give due consideration to all representations including community observations received or presented before publishing the relevant notice; but shall not be bound by any representation or objection given and shall make an independent determination.

20.-(1) Where it is proposed to declare any private land to be a private protected area, the Minister shall ensure that the declaration meets adequate and long term protection of the protected area in the public interest; and such protection shall be held in perpetuity.

Declaration of private protected area.

(2) A name given to a private protected area under subsection (1) is to include

- (a) the name of the class of that protected area; and
- (b) the prefix “private” before the class;

(3) A declaration of a private protected area under subsection (1) may only be made if the owner of the land has consented in writing to such a declaration.

(4) The owner or grantee of any private protected area so declared and registered shall be eligible for such taxation allowances or benefits or other fiscal incentives as may be prescribed in Regulations made under this Act.

Requirements
for
qualification as
private
protected
area.

21. To qualify for declaration as a private protected area, the owner of such land, or a grantee of the owner who is empowered to hold an interest in real property under the laws of Belize, shall apply for protection under any one or more of the following purposes

- (a) regulating the area as a buffer zone for the protection of a protected area;
- (b) enabling owners of land to take collective action to conserve biodiversity on their land and to seek legal recognition of their collective action;
- (c) protecting the area if the area is sensitive to development due to its
 - (i) biological diversity;
 - (ii) natural characteristics;
 - (iii) scientific or geological value;
 - (iv) scenic and landscape value;
 - (v) biological connectivity; or
 - (vi) for provision of environmental goods and services;
- (d) protecting a specific ecosystem outside of a protected area;

- (e) ensuring that the use of natural resources in the area is sustainable; or
- (f) controlling change in land use in the area if the area is earmarked for declaration as or inclusion in a protected area.

22. A protected area declared a private protected area under this section remains a protected area despite any subsequent disposition of the land or any other dealing in the land.

Status of private protected area on transfer of land.

23. The activities conducted or permitted by the land owner in a private protected area shall be consistent with the classification given to that protected area and shall be required to meet the same technical and procedural requirements of a public protected area and such requirements as may be prescribed by the Minister and any change of ownership in the land shall not affect the protected status.

Activities conducted within private protected area.

24. The Minister shall declare any area of public or private land as a marine or terrestrial biological corridor being a type of special management area, for the purpose of either

Declaration of biological corridors.

- (a) linking the primary forest nodes within the National Protected Areas System;
- (b) protecting hydro-ecological systems as riparian corridors;
- (c) terrestrial and marine transboundary linkages within the wider regional biological connectivity framework; or
- (d) fulfilling Belize's regional commitment in maintaining forest connectivity as part of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor, and its

international commitment as a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity:

Provided that no private land shall be declared except with the prior written consent of the owner of such land.

**Provisions for
biological
corridors.**

25.-(1) The Minister shall make provisions for biological corridors in order to

- (a) retain natural vegetation;
- (b) permit activities; and
- (c) define the roles and responsibilities of management bodies and/or land owners;
- (d) ensure the protection of riparian forests within biological corridors based on the length or size of the water bodies in the area, and for the retention of a minimum percentage of forest cover within lands located within biological corridors, exclusive of the riparian buffers.

(2) Where archaeological reserves or areas under the mandate of National Institute of Culture and History are considered to be representative areas within a biological corridor, the Advisory Council shall:

- (a) advise and request approval from the Minister responsible for this Act, and the Minister responsible for Culture, on effective ways in which to ensure the strengthening of coordination and collaborating between relevant management entities as established under this Act, and the Institute of Archaeology, respectively,

- (b) provide guidance to the implementation of the agreed upon coordinating and collaborative mechanisms between the management entities established under this Act and the Institute of Archaeology,
- (c) monitor and assess the effectiveness of the coordination and collaboration established under paragraph (b), where it relates to the fulfilment of the objectives of this Act, and the National Institute of Culture and History Act, and
- (d) provide periodic reports on effectiveness of the coordination and collaboration to the respective Ministers.

26. In declaring or re-classifying a protected area, the Minister shall ensure that existing rights on or to those protected areas are observed in respect of

Protection of rights on declaration or re-classification.

- (a) renewal of encumbrances on protected areas;
- (b) rights-of-way, easements and public-through-way on land declared protected areas; and
- (c) rights-of-way through private land to protected area.

PART VI

General Management of Protected Areas

27. Except where expressly stated otherwise in this Act, this Part applies to the management of all protected areas.

Application.

Preparation of management plans.

28. (1) Every management plan shall be prepared in accordance with the National Management Plan Framework.

(2) The National Management Plan Framework shall be reviewed and revised, as appropriate, every five years.

(3) In this section the reference to the National Management Plan Framework is a reference to the standardized guidelines that serve as a tool to guide protected area managers and co-managers in the development of their management plans.

Management criteria.

29. Every managing entity, public managing entity or co-management entity shall manage the protected area

- (a) in accordance with the management plan for the area; and
- (b) in accordance with any applicable enactment or by-laws;

Power to enter into co-management agreements.

30.- (1) The Minister may enter into an agreement with an NGO, or another organization, local community, or other party for

- (a) the co-management of the area by the parties; or
- (b) the regulation of human activities that affect the environment in the area.

(2) Co-management in paragraph (a) shall not lead to the duplication or fragmentation of management functions and shall be formalized through a co-management agreement that has been consulted publicly.

(3) Every managing entity, public managing entity or co-management entity has the power to appoint a person as an authorized officer to assist in the enforcement of any provisions of this Act or any of its regulations.

(4) Notwithstanding any delegation, a managing entity, public managing entity or co-management entity is responsible for ensuring compliance with section 51 and any other requirements under this Act.

(5) A public managing entity of an area is responsible for the supervision of a co-management entity and the implementation of the management plan of the area under co-management.

31.-(1) A co-management agreement may provide for

Co-
management
agreement.

- (a) the delegation of powers by the public managing entity to the other party to the agreement;
- (b) the use of biological resources in the area;
- (c) access to the area;
- (d) occupation of the protected area or portions thereof;
- (e) development of economic opportunities within and adjacent to the protected area;
- (f) development of local management capacity and knowledge exchange;
- (g) financial and other support to ensure effective administration and implementation of the co-management agreement; and
- (h) any other relevant matter.

(2) A co-management agreement shall be consistent with the other provisions of this Act.

Default by
managing
entity, public
managing
entity or co-
managing
entity.

32.-(1) If the managing entity, public managing entity or co-managing entity of a protected area is not performing its duties in terms of the management plan for the area, or is underperforming with regard to the management of the area or its biodiversity, the Minister shall

- (a) notify the managing entity, public managing entity or co-managing entity in writing of the failure to perform its duties or of the underperformance; and
- (b) direct the managing entity, public managing entity or co-managing entity to take corrective steps as set out in the notice within a specified time.

(2) If the managing entity or co-managing entity fails to take the required steps, the Minister may decide that-

- (a) a co-management agreement may be entered into with another conservation organization or with a community based organization;
- (b) deregister the areas as a private protected area unless the land owner takes the required steps as required by the Minister.

(3) If the managing entity of a private protected area fails to take the required steps, the Minister may,

- (a) determine the management actions needed for compliance with the management plan, including restoration if environmental damage has occurred as a direct result of non-compliance;

- (b) impose financial penalties on the managing entity to cover the costs identified under subsection (3)(a) immediately above.

(4) A person aggrieved by the Minister's decision under subsection (2) (a) or (b) or (3) (a) or (b) may seek legal redress in the Supreme Court.

PART VII

National Parks, Nature Reserves, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Natural Monuments

33.-(1) The Minister may by Order published in the *Gazette* declare that any specified area of land or sea shall for the purposes of this Act be –

Constitution of
national parks,
nature
reserves,
wildlife
sanctuaries
and natural
monuments.

- (a) a national park;
- (b) a nature reserve;
- (c) a wildlife sanctuary;
- (d) a natural monument.

(2) The Minister may by Order published in the *Gazette* declare that from a specified date-

- (a) the limits of any national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument shall be altered or varied;
- (b) any national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument or part thereof shall cease to be a national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument;

- (c) prohibit the use of vehicles on foot trails;
- (d) prohibit the landing of aircraft except on areas provided for such for approval purposes;
- (e) limit the use of vehicles to established roads;
- (f) prohibit the setting off of fireworks of any description or the making of any type of noise whatsoever;
- (g) require that any dog brought into the area be kept on a leash not over four feet (1.2 meters) long;
- (h) prohibit the playing of radios, tape players, gramophones and musical instruments altogether or in a manner which is disturbing to other visitors;
- (i) prohibit any act that detracts from the good order or general enjoyment of the area;
- (j) prohibit the selling of any food, beverage or goods except by licensed parties.

Development.

34.-(1) Upon the declaration of any area to be a national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument, the officer responsible shall place identification signs and regulations regarding the use of the area at all road and trail entrances to the area, including waterways where feasible.

(2) The officer responsible shall, as soon as practicable and prior to the construction of roads, trails or visitor facilities in a national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument, prepare a management plan for the area for approval by the Minister.

(3) Public access and facilities shall be developed in a manner which will minimize detrimental impacts on the various resources and overall scenic values of the park, reserve, sanctuary or monument.

(4) The Minister may, where such action is consistent with the purpose for which a national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary, or natural monument was established, grant licences for the provision of visitor facilities and services, which licences may, among other things, provide for-

- (a) the location, number and general specifications for the type or types of facilities to be developed;
- (b) the specific services to be provided;
- (c) approved methods of debris disposal;
- (d) sanitation and cleanliness standards;
- (e) reporting the amount of visitor use;
- (f) standards of behaviour and dress for employees of the licensee who have contact with the public;
- (g) freedom of examination of all business records by the officer responsible for the administration of the park, reserve, sanctuary or monument.

35. The Chief Forest Officer shall be responsible for the administration of national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, natural monuments and nature reserves.

Chief Forest Officer to administer national parks, etc.

36-(1) The Minister may from time to time make rules for the proper conduct and good management of any national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural

Rules.

monument or of the entire National Parks System and make rules which, *inter alia* –

- (a) prohibit overnight camping;
- (b) prohibit camping in unauthorized areas;
- (c) establish hours when any area will be open to the public;
- (d) prohibit open fires in specified areas and regulate the lighting of open fires anywhere within the park, reserve, sanctuary or other area covered by this Act.

(2) The contravention of any rule made under this section shall constitute an offence.

PART VIII

Offences, Evidentiary Provisions and Enforcement

General
prohibited
acts.

37.(1) Except as may be otherwise provided in this Act-

- (a) no person shall be entitled to enter any national park except for the purpose of observing the fauna and flora therein and for the purpose of education, recreation and scientific research;
- (b) no person shall be entitled to enter any nature reserve or in any way disturb the fauna and flora therein;
- (c) no animal shall be hunted, killed or taken and no plants shall be damaged, collected or destroyed in a national park or nature reserve;

- (d) no person shall hunt, shoot, kill or take any wild animal, or take or destroy any egg of any bird or reptile or any nest of any bird, in any wildlife sanctuary;
- (e) no person shall disturb the natural features of a natural monument, but may use the unit for interpretation, education, appreciation and research.

(2) A person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence.

38.-(1) No person shall enter or remain within any national park except under the authority and in accordance with conditions of a permit issued by the prescribed officer on payment of the prescribed fee.

Acts
prohibited
without
permit, etc.

(2) A permit under subsection (1) shall be issued only for the purpose of enabling the permit holder to study or observe the fauna and flora in a national park.

(3) No person shall enter or remain within any nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument except under the authority and in accordance with the conditions of a permit issued by the prescribed officer on payment of the prescribed fee.

(4) If no fee is prescribed for the issue of a permit under subsection (1) or (3), such permit shall be issued free of charge.

(5) A person who contravenes subsection (1) or (3) commits an offence.

39. (1) No person shall, within any national park, nature reserve, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument, except with the written authorization of the Chief Forest Officer-

Prohibited
activities
within national
parks, etc.

- (a) permanently or temporarily reside in or build any structure of whatever nature whether as a shelter or otherwise;
- (b) damage, destroy or remove from its place therein any species of flora;
- (c) hunt any species of wildlife;
- (d) quarry, dig or construct roads or trails;
- (e) modify or replace any sign and facilities provided for public use and enjoyment;
- (f) introduce organic or chemical pollutants into any water;
- (g) clear land for cultivation;
- (h) graze domestic livestock;
- (i) carry firearms, spears, traps or other means for hunting or fishing;
- (j) introduce exotic species of flora or fauna;
- (k) catch fish by any means whatsoever.

(2) A person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence.

General
offences and
penalties.

40.-(1) Any person who contravenes or aids in the contravention of any provisions of this Act or any regulations made hereunder for which no punishment has been specified, commits an offence and on summary conviction is liable to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars, and if the offender has within a preceding period of five years been convicted of a protected area offence or has paid

compensation for such an offence within that period, he shall be liable to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars or imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment.

(2) In addition to any sentence imposed under subsection (1), the court may, in addition, order the cancellation of any licence or permit granted under the provisions of this Act or any regulations made hereunder and the forfeiture of any natural object of value in respect of which an offence has been committed and of any vehicle, vessel or other transport or equipment used in the commission of the offence.

(3) When any person had been convicted of a protected area offence the court may, in addition to any other penalty provided by this Act or any other enactment, assess the amount of any damage which may have been caused by such offender and cause the same to be recovered in such manner as if it were a fine or, in the case of unauthorized establishments, buildings, huts, enclosures, standing crops, roads or trails on the National Protected Areas System, may order the removal of the same within such period as may be fixed and the restoration of the places as nearly as possible to their previous condition.

41. All objects forfeited shall, with the approval of the Minister, be disposed of by the public managing entity, managing entity or co-managing entity in such manner as the Minister may prescribe.

**Disposal of
forfeited
items.**

42.-(1) The Minister may, at his discretion, issue permits to bonafide organizations and scientists and other qualified professionals or specialists for cave exploration, collection of specimens of particular species of flora or fauna, group education activities, archaeological or paleontological exploration, scientific research and related activities.

Permits.

(2) All such permits shall require that copies of all data and findings from any of the activities specified in subsection (1), or any papers based on them, shall be provided to the Minister.

(3) The Minister may at his discretion, and subject to such conditions as he may think desirable attach thereto, issue permits for fishing in any area declared to be a national park, wildlife sanctuary or natural monument where such activity will not destroy or seriously detract from those values that were the principal reason for establishment of the protected area.

Power of
authorized
officer.

43.- (1) An authorized officer may

- (a) when he has reasonable grounds to suspect that a person is in possession of any article in respect of which a protected area offence has been committed, search such person or any baggage, parcel, vehicle, tent or buildings under the control, custody or possession of such person or his agent or employee;
- (b) seize any object in respect of which he has reasonable grounds to believe that a protected area offence has been committed;
- (c) arrest any person he has reasonable grounds to suspect of having committed any protected area offence if the person refuses to reveal his name and residence, states a name and residence which there is reason to believe is false or gives reason to believe he will abscond.

(2) Anything seized and any person arrested under this section shall, without unnecessary delay, be brought before the nearest magistrate.

44. (1) An authorized officer may, if he suspects that a protected area offence has been committed, question any person and record any statement he thinks relevant to the investigation of the offence.

Inquiries and evidence.

(2) In any subsequent prosecution, a magistrate may admit such statement in evidence provided such statement was taken in the presence of the accused, and an accused person may at his own expense require the presence of any such witness for cross-examination.

45.-(1) When any person is found in possession of any object in respect of which a protected area offence has been committed, he shall, unless he can prove that he came by the object innocently and without knowledge of the offence, be presumed to have committed the offence.

Presumption.

(2) When in any proceedings under this Act a question arises as to whether or not any natural object is the property of the Government, such natural object shall be presumed to be the property of the Government until the contrary is proved.

46. All offences under this Act are punishable on summary conviction on information which may be laid by the public managing entity of the protected area, or by any person authorized by the public managing entity in writing.

Offences punishable summarily.

47. The court may award any amount, not exceeding one-half of the fine imposed for an offence under this Act, to any person who may have supplied such information as may have led to the conviction of the offender.

Power of court to award remedy informant.

48. Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to prevent any person from being prosecuted under any other law for any act or omission which constituted an offence under that law or from being liable under such other law to any

Civil or other remedy preserved.

higher punishment or penalty than that provided under this Act, provided that no person shall be punished twice for the same offence.

Right of government to sue for compensation.

49. Nothing in this Act shall derogate from or interfere with the right of the Government or of any person to sue for and recover compensation for or in respect of damage or injury caused by a protected areas offence.

Application of Cattle Trespass Act. CAP. 208.

50. Cattle trespassing in or upon any land which has been declared a protected area shall be deemed to have been found in a prohibited area for the purpose of section 6 of the Cattle Trespass Act.

PART IX

General

Regulations.

51.-(1) The Minister, may from time to time make regulations for the implementation and regulation of matters under this Act, and such regulations may provide that the contravention of any of them shall be an offence.

(2) All regulations made under this Act are subject to negative resolution.

Regulations for prohibited and regulated activities for protected areas.

52.(1) Without limiting the generality of this section, regulations made under this Part may address

- (a) prohibitions against destruction or alteration of natural systems;
- (b) prohibitions against the killing, capturing, taking away, damaging or disturbing of any resource, or other object for exploitation or any other purpose;

- (c) prohibition against damage of ecosystems or species from pollution;
- (d) prohibitions against introduction of alien or exotic species;
- (e) prohibiting the use of explosives or poisons in a protected area;
- (f) prohibiting or regulating access to the whole or part of an area; prohibiting or regulating activities in a protected area, including hunting, fishing, camping, the use of fire, carrying on trade or commerce, construction or alteration of buildings, roads, or any other works, or the use of vehicles, vessels, aircraft or other devices in, over, or through a protected area;
- (g) regulating all conduct of persons in a protected area;
- (h) providing for the impoundment, removal, or destruction and disposal of domestic animals found straying in the protected area;
- (i) use or occupation of any land and construction or alteration of buildings, roads, or other works in any protected areas for a specified purpose;
- (j) acquiring or exercising any mining or other natural resources exploitation or exploration right in any protected area;
- (k) hunting, fishing, or collecting any flora or fauna;
- (l) use or manipulation of any waters within any protected area;

- (m) removal or alteration of any flora or fauna or other natural resource on the basis of a customary or other prior right of interest in any protected area;
- (n) conducting of any scientific research;
- (o) co-management agreements;
- (p) establishment and carrying on of any activity in any protected area;
- (q) redistribution of visitors to less crowded areas;
- (r) requirement of advanced registration to visitors for certain uses in certain areas;
- (s) regulation of the rate at which persons enter a protected area or regulation of the duration of the stay;
- (t) direct limitations on the number of people allowed in each area (e.g. on a first-come first-serve basis);
- (u) contingency planning and coordination of emergency response between PAs and other authorities involved;
- (v) emergency management decisions to involve prior consultation with the PAs public managing entity, managing entity, and co-managing to help decide on the least damaging alternative to the PAs;
- (w) establishing new categories of protected areas;
- (x) declaring an Interim Protection Unit;
- (y) regulations for Interim Protection Units; and

- (z) preventing and regulating detrimental external activities.

53. Notwithstanding anything contained in the General Registry Act, no lease of three years or less nor any licence or permit issued under the provisions of this Act shall be deemed invalid or non-effective because of it not being lodged for record in the General Registry.

Validity of certain leases, licences, and permits not affected by failure to register.

54.-(1) The Acts specified in the first column of the Schedule are amended in the manner specified in the second column of the Schedule.

Amendment of other Acts, and repeal and savings.

(2) Upon the commencement of this Act, the National Parks System Act shall stand repealed.

Schedule.
CAP. 215.

(3) Notwithstanding the repeal of the National Parks System Act all regulations made under that Act shall continue in force until amended or repealed.

(4) Notwithstanding the repeal of the National Parks System Act, nothing in this Act shall affect any proceedings taken or a right which has accrued or a liability which has been incurred under the repealed Act before the coming into force of this Act.

55. This Act comes into force on a day to be appointed by the Minister by Order published in the *Gazette*.

Commencement.

SCHEDULE

(Section 54 (1))

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO OTHER ACTS

| NAME OF ACT | AMENDMENTS |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fisheries Act, Chapter 210 Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011 | <p>Section 14 is amended by –</p> <p>(a) the addition after subsection (1) of the following as subsection (1A) “(1A) The exercise by the Minister of the power under subsection (1) is subject to the requirements of sections 14 (conditions to be met prior to declaration and alteration of new protected area), 17 (Minister to seek advice before making declaration) and 19 (public consultation and participation) of the <i>National Protected Areas System Act</i>”;</p> <p>(a) repealing subsection (2) and substituting therefor the following:”</p> <p>(2) Where an area declared as a marine reserve no longer serves the purpose for which it was declared, the Minister shall, by Order published in the <i>Gazette</i>, subject to an affirmative resolution, revoke the declaration; however, prior to revoking a declaration under this section, the Minister, shall hold public consultations with persons having an interest in the area, including users of the area.”</p> |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Forests Act, Chapter 213 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011</p> | <p>Section 3 is amended by –</p> <p>(a) renumbering the section as subsection (1); and</p> <p>(b) inserting the following as subsections (2) and (3) –</p> <p>“(2) The exercise by the Minister of the power under subsection (1) is subject to the requirements of sections 14 (conditions to be met prior to declaration and alteration of new protected area), 17 (Minister to seek advice before making declaration) and 19 (public consultation and participation) of the <i>National Protected Areas System Act</i>.</p> <p>(3) Where any national land declared as a forest reserve no longer serves the purpose for which it was declared, the Minister shall, by Order published in the <i>Gazette</i>, subject to an affirmative resolution, revoke the declaration; however, prior to revoking a declaration under this section, the Minister, shall hold public consultations with persons having an interest in the land so declared, including users of the land.”</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

BELIZE:

NATIONAL CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION ACT,
2017.

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No. 40 of 2017

I assent,

(SIR COLVILLE N. YOUNG)

Governor-General

22nd August, 2017

AN ACT to make provisions for the designation, protection and conservation of heritage assets under the leadership of the National Institute of Culture and History (NICH); to establish a Council to assist NICH in discharging its functions under this Act; to establish a fund exclusively for matters connected with heritage assets and to provide for a National Heritage Protection Plan for the proper implementation of the provisions of this Act; to provide for an inventory of heritage assets; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

(Gazetted 26th August, 2017).

BE IT ENACTED, by and with the advice and consent of the House of Representatives and the Senate of Belize and by the authority of the same, as follows:

PART I

Preliminary

1. This Act may be cited as the

Short title.

**NATIONAL CULTURAL HERITAGE
PRESERVATION ACT, 2017.**

Interpretation

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

“assets” or “heritage assets” means, irrespective of origin or ownership

- (a) moveable or immoveable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people, such as monuments of architecture, art or history, whether religious or secular; archaeological sites; groups of buildings which, as a whole, are of historical or artistic interest; works of art; manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest; as well as scientific collections and important collections of books or archives or of reproductions of the property defined above;
- (b) buildings whose main and effective purpose is to preserve or exhibit moveable property forming part of the heritage assets as defined in paragraph (a), such as museums, large libraries and depositories of archives, and refuges intended to shelter, in the event of armed conflict, moveable property heritage assets as defined in paragraph (a);
- (c) cemeteries, objects, and structures of historic, cultural, architectural, archaeological, scientific, artistic, ethnographic, paleontological or national interest and significance, and any information or data relating thereto,

“Council” means the National Heritage Advisory Council established under Part III of this Act;

“cultural property” means moveable or immoveable property forming part of the heritage assets;

“designation” means designation by the Minister and includes the identification and listing of heritage assets such as buildings, in order to ensure that they are protected, to allow them to be passed on to future generations;

“Fund” means the National Heritage Fund established under Part IV of this Act;

“heritage objects” means collections of art objects, manuscripts, books, published material, archives, audio-visual material, reproductions of any of the preceding, collections of historical value, and other tangible heritage assets;

“heritage places” means buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas, landscapes, groups of buildings, cemeteries, structures or land of historic, cultural, architectural, archaeological, scientific, artistic, ethnographic, paleontological or national interest or significance or closely connected to events of major historical importance which have contributed to national memory or to national historical identity;

“historical building” means a building that is a heritage place;

“Institute of Archaeology” means the Institute of Archaeology established under the National Institute of Culture and History Act;

“intangible cultural heritage” includes the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith, that communities, groups and in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage such as oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage, the performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and traditional craftsmanship related to the purposes of this Act;

“integrated conservation” means the whole range of measures aimed at ensuring the perpetuation of the cultural heritage, its maintenance as part of an appropriate environment, whether man made or natural, its utilization and its adaptation to the needs of society to be achieved through the revitalization

and integration of cultural heritage within the physical environment of present day society and by assigning a social function to such cultural heritage compatible with its dignity and its setting;

“list” means a list of listed properties;

“listed property” means a property included in a list of properties prepared in accordance with this Act;

“Minister” means the Minister with responsibility for culture;

CAP. 331.

“NICH” means the National Institute of Culture and History established under the National Institute of Culture and History Act;

“Plan” means the National Heritage Protection Plan prepared in accordance with Part V of this Act;

“President” means the President of NICH;

“Register” means the National Heritage Asset Register kept under section 32;

“restoration” means a highly specialized activity to conserve the integrity of a heritage asset to reveal its cultural values and to improve the legibility of its original state, form and design, within the limits of still existing material;

“safeguard” in relation to intangible cultural heritage means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.

PART II*Functions of NICH*

3. Notwithstanding anything contained in the National Institute of Culture and History Act and subject to the provisions of this Act, NICH, through its Institute of Archaeology, shall be responsible for the administration of this Act.

**Responsibility
of NICH.**

CAP. 331.

4. (1) The general functions of NICH under this Act shall be to promote and encourage the designation, protection, preservation, promotion and maintenance of heritage assets for the benefit and enjoyment of the present and future generations of the people of Belize and to ensure that the character of such assets is protected and that future changes made to them do not result in the loss of their significance.

**Functions of
NICH.**

(2) Without limiting the generality of its powers under subsection (1), NICH shall,

- (a) provide leadership in the preservation of heritage assets;
- (b) recommend to the Minister the designation of heritage assets and where necessary, whether or not such assets should be acquired by the Government;
- (c) liaise with other government and international organizations with respect to cooperation in, and protection of, heritage assets;
- (d) after consultation with the Council, advise the Minister on the need for enforcing urgent repair or conservation works on heritage assets, in accordance with this Act as well as the need for acquisition of historical buildings or other assets by the Government for the better protection and conservation of heritage assets;

- (e) draw the attention of the Government or of any organization or person to any urgent action that may be required in the field of cultural heritage;
- (f) permanently preserve any heritage assets of interest as far as practicable, retaining their natural features and conserving any animal and plant life where necessary;
- (g) preserve, restore, reconstruct, rehabilitate, maintain, repair, and service heritage assets, where such assets comprise buildings, and augment the amenities of such buildings and their surroundings, or arrange to have such done;
- (h) provide information to the owners of designated heritage assets and other assets with demonstrated or likely research significance, about the need for protection of same, and the available means of protection;
- (i) encourage owners to preserve heritage assets intact and in place, and offer such owners information on assistance available for the preservation of same;
- (j) erect and maintain tablets to mark or commemorate heritage assets and events of national, historical or archaeological significance;
- (k) make provisions for the access to and enjoyment of heritage assets by the local public, tourists and other interested bodies;
- (l) promote and encourage research in the field of cultural heritage, in order to foster scientific, technical and artistic studies, as well as research methodologies, with a view to effectively safeguard the heritage assets;

- (m) secure, collate, compile, and preserve drawings, plans, photographic or architectural records of heritage assets;
- (n) carry out necessary investigation and research relating to particular heritage assets to obtain true and accurate historical and archaeological facts, records, data and relevant information concerning the same;
- (o) operate and manage heritage assets acquired, designated or otherwise, together with lands and adjoining buildings for the benefit of the public, such authority to include the power to charge reasonable visitation fees and grant concessions, leases, or permits for the use of land, building space, roads, or trails when necessary or desirable, either to accommodate the public or to facilitate administration;
- (p) develop and promote an educational programme and service for the purpose of promoting public knowledge, education, appreciation and enjoyment of cultural heritage, including intangible cultural heritage;
- (q) endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, groups and where appropriate, individuals that create, maintain and transmit cultural heritage;
- (r) advise the Government on the conservation and preservation of heritage assets, and on any or all of the matters referred to in the above paragraphs;
- (s) safeguard the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills that communities, groups and in some cases

individuals, recognize as part of their cultural heritage;

- (t) solicit funds by means of subscription, donations, bequests and grants for the effective achievement of its objectives, and the implementation of this Act;
- (u) perform any other functions which may reasonably be required to fulfill the objectives of this Act.

(3) The duty of NICH to protect and conserve heritage assets shall include the duty to intervene in accordance with this Act whenever deemed fit, including in circumstances of misuse, lack of conservation, or application of wrong conservation methods.

(4) The duty to protect shall also include the duty to encourage the sustainable use and maintenance of the heritage assets in accordance with the principles of integrated conservation.

(5) NICH may consult and collaborate with and seek the advice of the Council with respect to any of its functions or any other matter under this Act.

(6) A function of NICH under this Act shall not be interpreted as usurping or derogating from the powers of any other authority under any other Act, and where, but for this subsection, a conflict between NICH and any other authority would exist, NICH shall make best efforts not to interfere with or otherwise affect the exercise of the powers of the other authority.

5. It shall be the duty of NICH to establish, update, manage and where appropriate, publish and ensure the compilation of an inventory of heritage assets belonging to,

(a) any public body;

(b) any individual or entity that is not a public body,

and “public body” means any department or agency of the Government or body established under any enactment to perform public functions, including a town council, city council or village council.

6. (1) NICH shall initiate consultations with other government and non-government entities performing various functions pertaining to the preservation and management of any heritage assets with the objective of formulating memoranda of understanding or other arrangements in writing between NICH and such other entities, which shall establish the mechanisms for coordination across jurisdictional lines and provide for the implementation of integrated programmes for the preservation and management of heritage assets.

Arrangement
with other
entities.

(2) Memoranda of understanding or other arrangements developed under this section and any other such arrangements developed thereafter may be amended from time to time, in order to further the objectives of this Act.

PART III

National Heritage Advisory Council

7. There is hereby established for the purposes of this Act a council to be known as the National Heritage Advisory Council, in order to better assist NICH in fulfilling the objectives of this Act, and whose functions shall be as outlined in the provisions of this Act.

Establishment
of Council.

8. (1) The Council shall consist of persons with knowledge and experience in cultural heritage and shall comprise,

Appointment
and
Composition of
Council.

(a) the President of NICH;

- (b)* the Director of the Institute of Archaeology;
- (c)* the Director of the Central Building Authority;
- (d)* the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys or his representative, being a person having expertise in physical planning;
- (e)* a representative of the Association of Professional Architect of Belize;
- (f)* the Director, Belize Archives and Records Service;
- (g)* the Director, Belize Tourism Board or his representative, being a person having expertise in tourism product development and destination planning;
- (h)* a person who represents a major private sector association with national scope;
- (i)* a professional in the discipline of trademarks, copyrights, and other means of intellectual property management;
- (j)* a professional in the discipline of architecture, history, architectural history, planning, prehistoric and historic archaeology, folklore, cultural anthropology, curation, conservation or landscape architecture, or related disciplines to the extent that those professionals are available in the community.

(2) The members of the Council shall be appointed by the Minister and shall hold office for a term not exceeding two years and may be eligible for reappointment.

(3) The President shall be the Chairman of the Council and the Council shall appoint one of its members to be the Vice Chairman.

(4) The Director of the Institute of Archaeology shall have no voting rights.

(5) The validity of any proceedings of the Council shall not be affected by any vacancy in the membership of the Council or by any defect in the appointment of a member thereof.

(6) A vacancy occurring in the Council shall be filled in the same manner as the appointment or election of the member vacating office and a person so appointed or elected shall hold office for the unexpired term of the person vacating office.

(7) The Institute of Archaeology shall serve as Secretariat to the Council.

9. Subject to the provisions of the First Schedule and the other provisions of this Act, the Council may adopt such rules as may be necessary to establish its procedures and govern the manner of its operations, organization and personnel.

**Procedures of
Council.
First Schedule.**

10. (1) A member of the Council or any other person present at a meeting of the Council and who is in any way, whether directly or indirectly, interested in any contract or proposed contract or other matter with the Council that is the subject of consideration by the Council, shall during any time when he is present at that meeting forthwith declare that interest and shall withdraw from the meeting and remain absent whilst the matter is under discussion and shall not take part in the discussion, consideration, deliberation or decision or voting on such contract or other matter.

**Declaration of
Interest.**

(2) Any disclosure made under subsection (1) above shall be recorded in the minutes of the Council meeting and the

member shall be disregarded for the purpose of constituting a quorum of the Council for any such discussion, consideration, deliberation, decision or voting.

(3) Any member of the Council who

- (a) knowingly fails to declare any interest he is obliged by subsection (1) to declare;
- (b) having declared such interest in accordance with subsection (1) fails to withdraw from the meeting; or
- (c) having withdrawn from the meeting in accordance with subsection (1), returns to that meeting during the time he is required by subsection (1) to absent himself from the meeting,

commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years, or to both such fine and term of imprisonment.

Personal
Liability
of Council
Members.

11. No personal liability shall be attached to any member of the Council for any act or omission of the Council or for anything done or permitted in good faith in the course of the operations of the Council under this Act.

Functions of
Council.

12. (1) The Council shall advise NICH generally on matters relating to heritage assets and shall exercise and discharge the functions conferred upon it by this Act and may do anything reasonably necessary or convenient for the exercise and discharge of those functions.

(2) Notwithstanding the generality of subsection (1) above, the particular functions of the Council shall be to,

- (a) assist NICH in the preparation of the Plan in accordance with the provisions in Part V;
- (b) prepare, in conjunction with NICH, guidelines and principles to be applied when deciding whether heritage assets, such as a building, should be designated;
- (c) make recommendations to NICH about any asset which in its opinion is a potential asset for designation or deaccession as a heritage asset;
- (d) make recommendations to NICH for inclusion or exclusion of heritage assets via amendments to the Register;
- (e) meet regularly and consult with non-governmental organizations and with persons operating in the commercial sector who are working in the field of cultural heritage;
- (f) encourage and promote the protection of heritage assets; and
- (g) do anything necessary or convenient for the exercise and discharge of its functions as may be reasonably required to further the objectives of this Act.

(3) In making recommendations as to the designation of heritage assets, the Council shall consult with or seek assistance as appropriate from any relevant scholarly, knowledgeable, skilled, experienced or professional individual, department or agency, educational or scientific body or organization, in the appropriate relevant disciplines.

13. The Council may appoint a committee or subcommittee for any of the purposes of this Act, and delegate to the

committee or subcommittee with or without restrictions or conditions as it thinks fit, any of its powers under this Act and any such committee or subcommittee shall be chaired by a voting member of the Council.

PART IV

National Heritage Fund

**Establishment
of Fund.**

14. There shall be established a fund to be known as the National Heritage Fund which shall be used exclusively for the designation, research, restoration, preservation, and other matters connected with heritage assets and which shall be kept separate and distinct from any general funds of the Government of Belize and NICH.

**Revenues of
Fund.**

15. The revenues of the Fund shall consist of the following

- (a) all moneys appropriated by the National Assembly for the purposes of this Act;
- (b) all moneys earned or arising from heritage assets acquired by NICH;
- (c) all moneys lawfully contributed, donated or bequeathed to the Fund from any legitimate source;
- (d) sums borrowed by NICH for the purpose of meeting any of its obligations or discharging its functions under this Act;
- (e) all income derived from the investment of moneys by or on behalf of the Fund;
- (f) all other lawful sums which may in any manner become payable to or vested in the Fund in respect of any matter incidental to its powers and functions.

Fund accounts,
moneys.

16. (1) NICH shall with the approval of the Minister of Finance open and maintain at such bank or banks as it may from time to time determine, accounts for the moneys of the Fund.

(2) All moneys forming part of the Fund shall, as soon as practicable after received, be paid into the Fund account.

(3) All payments out of the Fund, except petty disbursements not exceeding such sums as may be fixed by NICH, shall be made by such officer or officers as shall be appointed or designated for the purpose.

(4) Cheques against, and withdrawals from, any bank account of the Fund shall be signed and counter signed by such officers as may be determined or designated by NICH.

(5) The President shall cause to be kept proper, complete and accurate accounts and other records in relation to

(a) all the financial and business transactions of the Fund;

(b) assets and liabilities; and

(c) all other matters relating to the finances of the Fund;

and shall prepare annually a statement of accounts in a form satisfactory to the Minister of Finance, being a form which shall conform to best accounting and commercial standards and practices.

(6) Moneys of the Fund which have been allocated to a given project and which have not been expended on such project shall be returned to the Fund for reallocation or reinvestment.

(7) Moneys of the Fund shall be expended only to meet the objects and purposes authorized by this Act including necessary administrative, management and operational costs, and to repay principal and interest on loans made in connection with this Act.

(8) NICH shall keep full and accurate records of all moneys received and expended by the Fund.

(9) The accounts of the Fund shall be audited annually under such arrangements and in such manner as may be approved by the Auditor General.

Power to
invest.

17. (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, all moneys of the Fund not immediately required to be expended in the meeting of any obligations or the performance of any functions of the Council or NICH under this Act may be invested in such securities or other investments.

(2) NICH may make an investment from the Fund, only after seeking written professional independent financial advice and after prior written approval from the Minister of Finance, and provided that the money to be used for the investment is not designated for a specific purpose unrelated to the intended investment.

Activities etc.,
to be funded.

18. (1) The Council may recommend assistance to persons or entities in the form of funding of activities or training which may be eligible for such funding and to achieve the specific objectives of this Act.

(2) No moneys shall be awarded from the Fund to recipients unless an application for a disbursement of same is based upon guidelines established by the Council.

(3) Any moneys disbursed under this section shall be in fulfilment of the goals and objectives of this Act and only upon satisfaction of the criteria required under the relevant guidelines.

(4) All grant aid schemes or assistance programmes under the Fund shall be in accordance with the objectives of the Plan.

PART V

National Heritage Protection Plan

19. (1) NICH shall, in conjunction with the Council, and with assistance from appropriate technical, professional, qualified, knowledgeable and relevant personnel, prepare, oversee and review the implementation of a National Heritage Protection Plan which shall outline the national strategy for cultural heritage.

Preparation of Plan.

(2) The Plan shall be reviewed as often as may be necessary, and in any case not less than once in every five years, or earlier as the Minister may, at any time, determine, to ensure its priorities continue to be relevant and up to date.

(3) The first Plan shall be drawn up within a period of twelve months from the coming into force of this Act.

(4) The Plan shall, among other things, identify priorities following widespread consultation with relevant owners, individuals, local communities, organizations, relevant skilled and qualified experts, and shall identify what heritage assets are in danger of being lost.

20. (1) The proposed Plan, as prepared in accordance with section 19, shall be presented to the general public to facilitate further consultations, amendments, input and suggestions before finalization.

Endorsement of Plan.

(2) The finalized Plan shall be submitted to Cabinet for its endorsement and approval.

21. (1) The Plan shall outline policies and strategic directions to achieve the objectives of this Act and shall

Plan requirements.

- (a)** assist in predicting what may put heritage assets at risk in the future;
- (b)** identify current risks to heritage assets and responses to same;
- (c)** promote the discovery, research and recording of previously unknown heritage assets;
- (d)** involve decision making about what and why heritage assets matter;
- (e)** carry out actions to protect and conserve heritage assets by **creating records or by listing**;
- (f)** **assist communities in protecting their heritage assets when changes are being planned**;
- (g)** include actions to protect, conserve and promote major collections of heritage assets;
- (h)** initiate and support training and the development of skills needed for the preservation and maintenance of heritage assets;
- (i)** provide for cooperation at all levels to ensure that heritage assets are taken into consideration at all levels of planning and development;
- (j)** contain any other relevant and necessary information.

PART VI*Designation and Deaccession of Heritage Assets*

22. (1) In accordance with the principles and procedures laid down under this Act, NICH shall submit for approval of the Minister, assets that should be designated and included in the Register, as well as categories of designation in which the assets shall be registered.

Decision to
designate and
register.

(2) Notwithstanding the generality of subsection (1), NICH may submit to the Minister for his approval

- (a) a list of historical buildings and sites of particular national, historic, cultural or architectural interest which it has determined should be preserved as listed properties and which can effectively be so preserved under the provisions of this Act and any such list shall describe the lands included in the list with precision either in words or by reference to a registered deed, certificate of title, land certificate, crown grant or other title;
- (b) a list of properties of interest not falling under paragraph (a) or categories of such properties which should be preserved as listed properties under the provisions of this Act;
- (c) the revocation of any listing of any property or the revision of the listing of any category of property.

(3) Upon approval by the Minister of any list or of any revocation or revision of any listing prepared under subsection (2), such list or revocation or revision shall be published in the *Gazette* and the properties or categories of properties comprised in the list shall be or cease to be, as the case may be, listed property under this Act.

(4) Prior to the publication in the Gazette of any list prepared under subsection (2) (a) or of any revocation or revision prepared under subsection (2) (c), a true copy thereof as approved by the Minister shall be supplied to the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys who shall maintain a register of the listing or revocation or revision, as the case may be.

(5) The Commissioner of Lands and Surveys shall forthwith include any such list or revocation or revision in the register.

(6) The Commissioner of Lands and Surveys shall as far as reasonably possible, make the register available for inspection by members of the public.

Criteria for
designation.

23. (1) Where a heritage asset is proposed to the Minister for designation, the Council or NICH shall be guided by principles required to be established under this Act, in addition to the guidelines in the Second Schedule, when giving advice or making recommendations to the Minister.

(2) The state of repair of a building shall not be a relevant consideration when deciding whether a building is eligible for designation, and the Minister shall designate a building which has been assessed as meeting the statutory criteria, irrespective of its state of repair.

(3) For the purposes of this Act, a heritage asset shall fall within the scope of this Act, irrespective of the age or contemporaneity of same so long as the asset is of cultural, artistic, historical, ethnographic, scientific, industrial or other relevant value that is worth preserving.

Designation
of a heritage
asset and
registration.

24. After considering the recommendations of the NICH, the Minister shall where he is satisfied that it is appropriate to do so under this Act designate a place or object as a heritage asset and direct that it be entered into the Register.

25. (1) NICH shall notify the owner in writing by post or otherwise, and the general public, by publication in the Gazette, of the designation and registration, or of the deaccession, of a heritage asset.

Notice of designation and registration, etc., of a heritage asset.

(2) NICH shall notify in writing the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys and other relevant authorities of a designation or deaccession of a heritage asset.

(3) A notice given pursuant to this section shall contain clear identification of the heritage asset and shall include the terms and conditions of the designation.

26. A heritage asset may be deaccessioned and removed from the Register in any one or more of the following circumstances

Deaccession.

(a) where the asset is damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster and the cost of the repair is determined to outweigh the value of the asset;

(b) where the asset is in a state of disrepair or has deteriorated such that conservation and maintenance outweigh the value of the property;

(c) where a duplicate or similar asset is acquired that is in a better condition and is determined to have more value for exhibition and research purposes;

(d) where major urban development or state sponsored infrastructural projects impact the heritage asset and it has been determined by NICH and the Council that the value of such projects outweighs the conservation of such property.

27. (1) The owner of a registered heritage asset who enters into a contract of sale of the whole or any part of that heritage asset must notify NICH in writing of the prescribed information in relation to that heritage asset and about the

Notice of intention to sell a registered heritage asset.

existence of that contract within 28 days of the date of the contract.

(2) A person who fails to comply with subsection (1) commits an offence, and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding twenty-five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Change of ownership of a registered heritage asset.

28. (1) A person who purchases or acquires a heritage asset must, within 28 days of the date of the completion of the purchase or acquisition, notify NICH in writing of

(a) the person's name and address; and

(b) in the case of the purchase or acquisition of a building, whether the person intends to occupy the building.

(2) A person who has notified NICH of information under subsection (1) must, within 28 days of the date of any change to the information provided, notify NICH in writing of the change.

(3) A person who fails to comply with this section commits an offence, and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding twenty-five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Effect of registration of object.

29. If an object is registered in relation to a place and that place is destroyed the object remains on the Register until removed from the Register in accordance with the provisions of this Part.

Amendment or removal from Register.

30. The Minister on the recommendation and advice of NICH, may amend an item in or remove an item from the Register.

31. The Commissioner of Lands and Surveys shall maintain a register of properties which are designated or deaccessioned under this Part.

Commissioner of Lands and Surveys to maintain a register.

PART VII

The National Heritage Asset Register

32. NICH shall be responsible to develop and manage a National Heritage Asset Register and all lists required under this Act, and shall make the Register and lists available for public scrutiny during business hours.

Establishment of a register.

33. The Register to be developed and maintained pursuant to section 32 shall include the following information

Composition of Register.

- (a) descriptive details to identify the place or object designated;
- (b) status of heritage asset; and
- (c) any other detail deemed relevant to the heritage asset.

34. In recording the heritage asset in the Register, NICH shall categorize the asset as a,

Categories of registration.

- (a) heritage place; or
- (b) heritage object.

35. (1) NICH shall serve notice in accordance with the provisions of this section on any persons affected under section 23.

Serving of notices.

- (2) NICH shall cause a notice to be served either
- (a) personally or by post, addressed to the last known place of abode if within a postal district, on every person who is known to be the owner

or to be in possession of any specific property which is the subject of a listing, revocation or revision under section 23 (1); or

(b) by posting such notice conspicuously on the said property where no one is in possession and the owner is not known, and by publishing the same in at least three issues of a daily newspaper circulating in Belize as well as in the Gazette.

(3) Every such notice shall be signed by the President or the Director of Institute of Archaeology on behalf of NICH and shall specify the property listed and the date of the listing or revocation or revision in question, as the case may be.

Appeal.

36. (1) A person aggrieved by the listing of any property or designation of any asset may within three months of the date of listing or designation, appeal in writing to the Minister against the decision setting out the grounds of his appeal.

(2) Where an appeal is made to the Minister under this section, the Minister,

(a) shall consider the appeal within six weeks of the date of its submission to him in writing; and

(b) may dismiss the appeal, giving his reasons in writing; or

(c) may direct NICH in writing giving reasons, to revoke or revise the listing or designation, as the case may be, if it is shown among other things, that the listing or designation does not meet the necessary criteria, and NICH shall comply with any direction given it by the Minister under this section.

(3) Where the Minister dismisses an appeal made to him under this section, the person aggrieved by the decision may

by originating summons served on NICH, appeal to a Judge in Chambers who may,

- (a) pending a decision in the matter, make such interim order as he sees fit to preserve the respective interests of the parties in the matter; or
- (b) dismiss the appeal, or order that the listing or designation be revoked or revised or amended.

(4) A Judge's order revoking, revising or amending a listing or designation shall be deemed to be a list or designation for the purposes of this Part except that no notice shall be required to be served under section 35, on the parties to the appeal.

PART VIII

Nominations and Procedure for Registration

37. (1) A person or body corporate may nominate a place or object for inclusion in the Register.

Nominations
for assets to be
designated and
registered.

(2) A nomination made pursuant to subsection (1), shall be made in writing to the Council in a manner approved by NICH.

(3) Where the Council receives a nomination made pursuant to subsection (1) it shall assess the merit of the nomination and where it is satisfied that it meets the criteria established under this Act, it shall recommend to NICH the consideration of the place or object for recommendation to the Minister for designation and registration.

(4) The Director of NICH may nominate a place or object for inclusion in the Register.

(5) A nomination made under this section shall specify reasons to warrant inclusion in the Register and must indicate satisfaction of criteria for designation as provided for in this Act.

(6) In considering a nomination under this section, NICH may request such additional information it deems fit as needed to assist the consideration of the nomination.

Certain
nominations
not to be
accepted.

38. (1) NICH must not accept a nomination of a place or object under this section if

- (a) in the preceding 12 months, the Minister had refused to register or had revoked the registration of that place or object ; or
- (b) in the preceding 12 months, the Council had refused an application for reasons of non-compliance, and at the date of the application, there was still non-compliance with the conditions

(2) NICH may accept a nomination relating to a place or object referred to in subsection (1)(a) or (b) if NICH receives significant new information relating to that place or object which was not available to NICH, the Council or the Minister in reaching the decision referred to in subsection (1).

Notice to
owner on
nomination.

39. Where the nominator is not the owner of the place or object nominated under section 37, NICH shall within thirty days of the nomination notify the owner of the nomination.

Deferral of
consideration
of nomination.

40. (1) Where a place or object which is the subject of a nomination has been offered for sale or is offered for sale within sixty days of the making of the nomination, NICH shall defer, with the agreement of the owner of the place or object, the consideration of a nomination until after completion of the sale.

(2) The owner of a place or object which is the subject of a nomination under this Act, shall, before entering into a contract for the sale of that place or object, inform the purchaser of the place or object of the nomination and of any deferral of consideration of the nomination.

(3) If the owner of land or an object which is the subject of a nomination under this part fails to comply with subsection (1), the contract of sale is not invalid, but is voidable at the option of the purchaser.

41. (1) If NICH recommends to the Minister that a place or object be included in the Register, NICH shall notify

Statement
to owner on
submission of
nomination.

- (a) the owner of the place or object;
- (b) the nominator of the place or object; and
- (c) the relevant municipal authority.

(2) A notification given under subsection (1) shall

- (a) be in writing;
- (b) set out the terms of the recommendation;
- (c) include a brief statement of the cultural heritage significance of the place or object;
- (d) advise the owner or nominator that the NICH will make a recommendation on the nomination to the Minister within sixty days;
- (e) advise the owner that the owner may
 - (i) make a submission in response to the recommendation to the Council at any time within that period of sixty days; and
 - (ii) request a hearing in relation to that submission; and
- (f) set out a summary of the rights and obligations under this Act of the owners of designated assets of that kind as set out in this Act.

Obligations of owners.

42. An owner that has received a statement pursuant to section 41, shall inform NICH within thirty days of receipt of the statement of

- (a) information on any works being carried out;
- (b) any application for a planning permit or a building permit or amendments to any such planning permit that has been made in relation to the place, but not determined at the time the statement is given;
- (c) any sale or activities to partially or wholly dispose of the place or object; and
- (d) any other activities that may be carried out.

Notice of recommendation for nomination.

43. (1) NICH shall cause a notice of recommendation for nomination to be published in three consecutives issues of the *Gazette* and in at least two issues of a newspaper circulating generally in the area in which the nominated place or object is located.

(2) A notification published under subsection (1) shall invite any person aggrieved by the intention of the designation to submit a concern with reasons in writing within thirty days of the last publication.

(3) NICH shall consider any representations made pursuant to subsection (2) in making a determination for nomination under this Part.

PART IX

Interim Protection Orders

Scope of section.

44. (1) This Part has effect despite anything in or authorized by the Building Act or any other Act but is subject to

- (a) any regulation; or

- (b) any emergency order under the Building Act relating to the securing, pulling down or removal of dangerous buildings.

45. (1) The Minister may make an interim protection order in relation to a place or object if, in the opinion of the Council or NICH, it is necessary or desirable to do so for the purposes of this Act.

Power to make interim order.

(2) An interim protection order must be in the form prescribed by NICH.

(3) The Council or NICH shall cause the interim protection order or a reproduction of the order to be served on the owner, occupier or person apparently in charge of the place or object.

(4) In the case of

- (a) a place which is a government building or government land; or
- (b) an object which is in or on a government building or government land,

NICH shall give the order required to be served under subsection (3) to a Minister or any other person or body of persons, whether corporate or unincorporate, responsible for the care, management or control of that building or land.

46. (1) An interim protection order takes effect on the service of the order under section 45.

Effect of interim protection order.

47. (1) An interim protection order may be served on a person

Manner of service of order.

- (a) by delivering it to that person; or

- (b) by leaving it at his or her usual or last known place of residence;
- (c) by forwarding it by post in a prepaid letter addressed to him or her at his or her usual or last known place of residence;
- (d) by forwarding it electronically to that person at his or her last known personal or business email address;
- (e) in the case of a place, by displaying it at that place; or
- (f) in the case of an object, by displaying it on or near the object.

(2) If an interim protection order

- (a) is served on a person other than an owner of a place or object; or
- (b) in the case of a place or object, is served on the owner by displaying it at that place or on or near that object

NICH or the Council shall, as soon as possible after the service of the order cause a copy of the order to be served on the owner in accordance with subsection (1)(a), (b), (c) or (d) or if the address of the owner is unknown, cause a copy of the order to be published in a newspaper circulating generally in Belize.

Period of
interim
protection
order.

48. (1) An interim protection order relating to a place or object continues in force,

- (a) for a period of 4 months or for any further period specified by the Minister under subsection (3); or

(b) until

(i) the place or object is included in the Register;

(ii) the Minister, on the advice of NICH determines that the place or object does not warrant inclusion in the Register; or

(iii) the Minister removes the order, whichever first occurs.

(2) The Minister may when he considers it necessary, remove an interim protection order.

(3) The Minister may, at any time after an interim protection order is served, extend the period of which an interim protection order continues in force.

(4) A notice of an extension under subsection (3) must be served in the same manner as the interim protection order is served.

PART X

Repairs Notice

49. (1) A repairs notice shall be served on an owner where the protracted failure by the owner to keep a designated building in reasonable care places the building at risk, such as where a building is neglected so that the need for permanent repair has accumulated to the point where the building is at risk of serious harm.

Repairs Notice.

(2) NICH may serve a repairs notice on an owner where

(a) it is shown that a designated building is in a serious state of disrepair and the owner is unwilling or unable to carry out the repairs himself;

- (b) the owner has not taken reasonable steps to preserve the building;
- (c) it is expedient that the building should be preserved; and
- (d) it is shown that the building will be better off in the ownership and care of the Government or in the guardianship of some other entity which the Government may entrust or issue a lease to for the purpose of securing its preservation.

Purpose of repairs notice.

50. A repairs notice shall only be intended to secure works for the long term preservation of a designated building and there shall be no requirement under this Act to consider the financial means of an owner when specifying the works under a repairs notice.

Contents of repair notice.

51. A repairs notice shall specify the works which are reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of a designated building and such notice shall fix a time limit within which any necessary repair or restoration shall be effected.

Serving of repairs notice.

52. A repairs notice shall be served in the manner specified under section 35 of this Act.

Procedure for failure to preserve building.

53. Where after not less than three months of serving a repairs notice, it appears that reasonable steps are not being taken by the owner for the proper preservation of a building, or repairs are not being carried out in a timely and efficient manner in accordance with a repairs notice, NICH may after obtaining a resolution of the Council to this effect, initiate the process of acquisition of the building from the owner.

Power of entry for purpose of ascertaining repairs.

54. NICH may authorize the entry into a designated building or adjoining land for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not any, and if so, to what extent, restoration or repairs are

necessary, or whether or not any, and if so, what restoration or repairs have been carried out, and whether such restoration or repairs have been carried out in the manner specified in a repairs notice served under this Part.

PART XI

Acquisition and Compensation

55. (1) Where, under this Act, it is necessary to acquire land or buildings or any estate or interest in land, in furtherance of the promotion of cultural heritage or the preservation of the national or historical identity in accordance with the provisions of this Act, such acquisition may, subject to this Part, be effected by way of gift, private treaty, agreement to purchase or compulsory acquisition.

Acquisition of Land, etc.

(2) Any land or building, or an estate or interest in land, or any part thereof which is intended to be compulsorily acquired for the purposes of this Act for the benefit of the people of Belize shall be acquired in accordance with the provisions of the Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Act.

CAP. 184.

(3) An acquisition for the purpose of this Act shall be deemed to be a “public purpose” within the meaning of that term in the Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Act.

CAP. 184.

56. Where a declaration is made for the acquisition of land on account of the fact that it is a designated heritage asset, the said declaration shall state that fact.

Declaration of land required for specific purpose.

57. (1) A historical building that is privately owned and kept in a good state of repair and maintenance and to which access to the public, whether or not against payment or otherwise, is granted on a regular basis by its owner or administrator for educational, cultural or touristic purposes, shall not be acquired as a historical building under this Act.

Exception from acquisition.

(2) A historical building that falls within a classification established as excepted from acquisition shall not be acquired as a historical building under this Act.

Schedule.

Duty to serve
notice.

58. Where it is necessary to acquire any land or building or any estate or interest thereof for the purposes of this Act, notice of such intended acquisition shall be served upon the owner or occupier thereof in accordance with section 35 of this Act.

Right of
Government
over building.
CAP 184.

59. (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Act but subject to the provisions of this section, where any land acquired under same for the purposes of this Act, consists of a dwelling house actually occupied as such, the owner or the occupier of same shall yield up possession thereof to the Government within twenty working days from the date of the second publication of the declaration in the Gazette.

(2) The occupier of a dwelling house shall not be required to yield up possession thereof before the lapse of twenty days from the date when alternative accommodation, reasonably sufficient for the persons resident in that dwelling house, has been offered in writing by the Government to the said occupier.

(3) On the elapsing of the time mentioned in subsection (2), the Government may without any further formality enter upon and take possession of the land and property, or authorize any person to enter upon and take possession of same and, notwithstanding any restriction imposed on such land or property by any other law or by any instrument or otherwise, do or authorize any person to do in or upon or in relation to same, any work or other thing whatsoever which any person having an unrestricted interest in the land and property would be entitled to do by virtue of that interest saving the liability of the Government to reinstate the land or pay compensation for any damage caused if in the cases permitted under the Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Act the acquisition is not completed.

CAP. 184.

60. (1) In assessing the amount of compensation payable to the owners of land and buildings acquired for the purposes of this Act under the Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Act, regard shall be had, among other things, to the following:

Compensation.

CAP. 184.

(a) the state of disrepair of the building; and

(b) the fact that the owner has deliberately allowed the building to fall into disrepair.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), in the case of a historical building, the value thereof shall be calculated as the full value of the historical building if sold on the open market, subject to the condition that the use that can be made thereof shall be limited to use for educational, touristic or cultural purposes, less the amount required for the historical building to be restored in accordance with internationally accepted guidelines and standards of craftsmanship and practice for the purpose of rendering it suitable for such educational, touristic or cultural use.

(3) Where the value of a historical building as calculated in accordance with this section results in an amount that is higher than the open market value of the said building at the time of the second publication in respect thereof, the full value of the historical building shall not exceed the said open market value.

(4) In this section, “the full value of the historical building” means, if the historical building belongs in absolute ownership to the person from whom it has been expropriated, the full value of that building.

61. Notwithstanding the provisions contained in the Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Act, any person claiming an interest in or right over any property compulsorily taken possession of or acquired for the purposes of this Act, shall have a right of access to the courts for the purpose of

Right of access
to courts.

CAP. 184.

- (a) establishing his interest or right, if any;
- (b) determining whether or not the taking of possession or acquisition was duly carried out for a public purpose in accordance with this Act and the Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Act;
- (c) determining the amount of any compensation to which he may be entitled; and
- (d) enforcing his right to any such compensation.

PART XII

Financial

Power to
borrow.

CAP 331.

62. Notwithstanding the provisions of the National Institute of Culture and History Act, NICH shall be entitled to exercise the following powers for the purposes of this Act

- (a) NICH may, after consultation with reputable financial experts and after obtaining a resolution of the Council to borrow, borrow sums required by it for meeting any of its obligations or discharging any of its functions under this Act;
- (b) the power to borrow under this section shall be exercisable only with the approval of the Minister of Finance, as to the amount, the source of the borrowing and the terms on which the borrowing may be effected, and any approval given in any respect for the purposes of this section may be either general or limited to a particular borrowing or otherwise, and may be either unconditional or subject to conditions.

Estimates.

63. (1) NICH shall cause to be prepared not later than eight weeks before the end of each financial year, estimates of its income and expenditure for the next following financial year, for meeting any of its obligations or discharging any of its functions under this Act.

(2) In the preparation of such estimates NICH shall take into account any funds and other moneys that may be due to be paid to it out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund during the relevant financial year, whether by virtue of this Act or an Appropriation Act or any other law; and NICH shall so prepare the said estimates as to ensure that its total revenues are at least sufficient to meet all sums properly chargeable to its revenue account including, but without prejudice to the generality of that expression, “depreciation.”

(3) Such estimates shall be submitted to the Minister through the President.

64. All fees, penalties, compensation and other moneys derived under this Act shall be payable into the Fund.

Fees to be paid into Fund.

PART XIII
General

65. (1) NICH shall, no later than the last day of April in each year, prepare a report dealing generally with its activities during the financial year and containing such information relating to its proceedings and policy and Plan.

Annual Report.

(2) The report shall be submitted to the Minister through the President and shall be laid on the table of the National Assembly.

66. NICH shall keep a separate and distinct index of all designation of heritage assets made and revoked under this Act.

Index of designated assets.

67. (1) The Minister of Finance may, by Order published in the Gazette, transfer to NICH any heritage assets belonging to the Government to enable such assets to be properly preserved and maintained under this Act.

Transfer of property.

(2) An Order under subsection (1).

- (a) may contain such incidental, consequential or supplemental provisions as the said Minister thinks necessary or expedient for the purposes of the Order; and
- (b) shall be subject to affirmative resolution of the House of Representatives.

(3) Any heritage assets vested in NICH under this section shall be held in trust for the people of Belize.

Guardianship.

68. (1) NICH may, with the authority of the Minister in writing, and in concurrence with the Minister responsible for lands, enter, by public deed, into a guardianship contract with any local or foreign organization or other related entity whereby the custody and administration of Government owned designated buildings or other heritage assets is passed over to such entity as the case may be, in accordance with the provisions of this Act and subject to such conditions not inconsistent therewith as may be contained in the deed.

(2) A guardianship deed under this section shall state the term for which it is entered, which term shall be approved by the Minister on a case by case basis, following the careful consideration of the feasibility and scale of undertaking of each proposal.

(3) Before entering into a guardianship deed, NICH shall seek the views of the Council as to the conditions to be included in the deed, such conditions in particular to take the following matters into consideration

- (a) the protective measures that are to be taken to safeguard the heritage assets subject to the deed; and
- (b) the conservation and management plan relative to the property, the organizational, operational and financial arrangements in connection therewith,

and the organizational, operational and financial resources to be dedicated therefor.

(4) A guardianship deed shall not prejudice any powers of NICH or the Council under this Act with regard to the property in question subject to such deed.

(5) The property subject to the guardianship deed shall remain the property of the Government.

(6) The Minister may in consultation with the Council, and at any time by Order published in the Gazette, rescind the guardianship deed if any conditions stipulated therein or the provisions of this Act are not observed by the other party.

(7) No later than six weeks after each anniversary of a guardianship deed, the entity in whose custody the heritage asset is placed shall transmit to the Minister and NICH, a report of its activities in relation to the heritage asset and the manner in which it has executed the guardianship deed during the previous year.

(8) The Minister may, upon recommendation of NICH and in consultation with the Council, make rules generally in relation to guardianship.

69. NICH shall not enter into any contract for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or for the rendering of services in connection with this Act, without following proper transparent procurement and tendering procedures established by the Ministry of Finance.

Contracts of
supply and
works.

70. (1) No person shall make any alterations to or carry out any works or development on any designated heritage asset without first applying to and obtaining permission from NICH.

Permit for
intervention on
heritage asset.

(2) A person desiring to make alterations to a designated heritage asset shall apply in writing to NICH for permission to do so.

(3) Before determining an application under this section, NICH may require such information including the results of such tests, examinations or inspection by such person or persons accredited under this Act for the purpose as may be required by NICH, and such research on the history, composition, provenance or other aspect of the relevant heritage asset as may be considered necessary for the purpose.

(4) In granting permission under this section, NICH may impose such conditions as it may consider appropriate, including without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing

- (a) that the work or any part thereof shall be carried out in accordance with such protocol as may be prescribed or as may be attached to the permission;
- (b) that the work and the various phases thereof be photographed or otherwise documented or recorded;
- (c) that a report on the work be delivered to NICH at such times as may be stated in the permission; and
- (d) that the work or any part thereof as may be stated in the permission is carried out, by or under the supervision as shall be stated in the permission, of such person or persons accredited under this Act for such work.

Suspension
notice.

71. Where any development or other work is being carried out in respect of any heritage asset

- (a) in contravention of any of the provisions of this Act;
- (b) which does not conform to guidelines and criteria established by NICH; or

- (c) which does not conform to any condition attached to a permission,

NICH may serve a suspension notice on the owner or occupier of such heritage asset to suspend all such development or other work.

72. (1) Any officer or employee of NICH duly authorized in writing by NICH may enter any area, property, site under investigation, or building if NICH considers it necessary to do so in the discharge of any function under this Act or if NICH considers that there are reasonable grounds to believe that an offence under this Act, or permit conditions made hereunder has been or is about to be committed.

**Power of entry
and inspection.**

(2) Where entry is for the purpose of inspection or documentation purposes, NICH shall serve a written notice the occupier of heritage a asset, of its intended entry, and thereupon the officer or employee authorized as aforesaid shall be given access to such heritage asset where conservation, restoration, works carried out under a repairs notice, or development is taking place.

(3) No person shall enter any building or any court or garden attached to any dwelling house except with the consent of the occupier or owner thereof and unless previously giving such occupier or owner at least twenty-four hours' notice of his intention to do so.

73. (1) Any person who alters, damages, modifies or makes any unauthorized changes to any heritage asset commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

**Penalty for
damage, etc.,
to heritage
assets.**

(2) In addition to the penalty imposed under subsection (1) above, the court may order such person to pay to NICH by way of compensation, an adequate sum for the purpose of

repairing or restoring the heritage assets so altered, damaged, modified or changed.

Penalty for
destruction,
etc., of
heritage assets.

74. (1) Any person who willfully demolishes or destroys or causes to be demolished or destroyed any heritage assets commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five hundred thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

(2) In addition to the penalty imposed under subsection (1) above, the court may order such person to pay to NICH by way of compensation, an adequate sum for the heritage assets so demolished or destroyed.

Offence
by body
corporate.

75. Where an offence under this Act is committed by a body corporate and it is proved to have been committed with the consent, knowledge or connivance of, or to be attributable to any negligence on the part of any director, manager, secretary or other officer of the body corporate, he as well as that body is deemed to be guilty of that offence and is liable to be proceeded against and penalized accordingly.

Regulations.

76. (1) The Minister may make regulations as may be necessary or expedient for giving full effect to the provisions of this Act and for prescribing anything that needs to be prescribed.

(2) Regulations made under this section shall be made after consultation with relevant stakeholders and shall be subject to negative resolution.

(3) Regulations made under this section may provide that a contravention or breach thereof shall be punishable on summary conviction by a fine not exceeding five hundred thousand dollars or by a term of imprisonment of up to five years, or to both.

Amendment of
Schedules.

77. The Minister may from time to time, by Order, subject to negative resolution, published in the *Gazette*, amend any Schedule to this Act.

FIRST SCHEDULE**[Section 9]****Rules of Council**

- (a)** The Chairman of the Council shall preside at all meetings of the Council and in the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman shall act as the chairman at any meeting of the Council.
- (b)** Where for any reason, the Chairman or Vice Chairman is unable to preside at any meeting of the Council, the members present shall elect one of their number to preside at the meeting.
- (c)** A pro tem chairman elected under subsection (2) above shall have all powers of the chairman at that meeting, including the power of exercising a casting vote in addition to his original vote.
- (d)** The quorum for any meeting of the Council shall be five members and the decision of the majority present at any meeting shall be the decision of the Council.
- (e)** The Chairman shall ensure that a minute book is kept with proper and accurate records of the Council's meetings, resolution, decisions, proceedings, all business transacted at each meeting, and all other relevant information.
- (f)** The Council may co-opt one or more persons to attend any particular meeting of the Council for the purpose of advising or assisting the Council in its deliberations but such person shall have no voting rights.

SECOND SCHEDULE

[Section 23]

Criteria for
designation.

1. (1) In determining the criteria for designation and inclusion of a heritage asset in the Register, the following shall be considered

- (a) historicity;
- (b) rarity and uniqueness;
- (c) social and cultural association;
- (d) design and aesthetics;
- (e) potential to educate;
- (f) artistic excellence;
- (g) provenance;
- (h) local and regional patrimony;
- (i) Scientific attributes;
- (j) International repute;
- (k) Indigenusness to Belize;
- (l) any other relevant consideration.

(2) In respect of historic buildings, the criteria to be considered for designation are

- (a) individual architectural merit;
- (b) historical associations;
- (c) sociological interests;
- (d) technological innovation;
- (e) association with well known character or events;
- (f) group value, in urban and rural planning.

Appendix H
Transcript: *The History of St. John's Cathedral*

START

0:00 Welcome to the Cathedral Church of St. John the Baptist. A building rich in over 200 years of history and fellowship.

0:12 St. John's is the oldest Anglican Church in all of Central America. A landmark of enormous historical significance in the development of the nation of Belize.

0:23 In an era of British and Spanish colonial conflict St. John's served as a notable symbol of their homeland to the British settlers.

0:32 Memorial tablets to these early Englishmen and their families line the cathedral walls. Many were drawn to the Americas by dreams of wealth but were met instead by immense challenges and early deaths in the young settlement.

0:48 The building itself was a massive undertaking for the time period. Specialty bricks and a master brick layer arrived via ships from London.

0:56 Local mahogany and stones were brought downriver from the jungle and pine beams arrived from trade partnerships with the young United States.

1:06 Building began in 1812 and the church was consecrated 14 years later in 1826.

1:12: The shape of the cathedral is significant. A cross set on a floating mahogany foundation with the altar facing East towards the rising sun.

1:22 Slaves performed the construction of St. John's. After the emancipation free slaves worshiped, baptized their children, and were married in the cathedral.

1:33 August of 1838 marked another political milestone. The service of thanksgiving for the emancipation of the slaves was held in St. John's by rector Dr. Matthew Newport. Dr. Newport is buried on the north side of the cathedral.

1:50 Over the centuries St. John's continued to play a key part of the changing politics of the region. The coronations of the kings of the Mosquito Coast nation in what is now Nicaragua were performed here in the 1800's. Making St. John's the only Anglican cathedral outside Westminster Abbey where the crowning of kings has taken place.

2:13 Many original items remain in the church today paired with improvements, repairs and construction from across the centuries. They are part of the history of St. John's Cathedral and of Belize as a nation.

2:28 Before you go we hope you will take a moment to imagine the accomplished individuals who have sat where you are seated and the many special occasions marking significant moments of the history of the community and nation. The numerous weddings, funerals, baptisms, and other ceremonies that have taken place in this house of worship over the last 200 years.

2:49 St. John's Cathedral continues to proudly serve the people of Belize performing daily sermons and services providing a glimpse of the storied past of the region and adding to the remarkable living history of the cathedral that continues to this day.

3:14 [on screen text] "Thank you for visiting St. John's Cathedral serving Belize since 1812"

END

Appendix I
Transcript: *St. John's Cathedral, Belize Oral History*

START

0:00 [on screen text] "KREM Television in association with"

0:05 [on screen text] "The Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project"

0:12 [on screen text] "Presents Oral History"

0:20 This '2 Cents Cam' segment pass in St. John's Cathedral now initiative of the Belize House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project. Project partners the National Institute of Culture and History, Belize City Council and the international funding agency Taiwan International Cooperation Development Fund.

0:38 Two cents question today my sister what is one historical truth you know about St. John's Cathedral? Cornerstone was laid in 1812. Thanks for Two Cents.

0:47 Two cents question today my sister what is the one historical truth you know about St. John's Cathedral? We know that it's over 200 years old. We celebrated 200th anniversary in 2012 and so this year its twenty, 200 and four years. Thanks for Two Cents.

1:03 Two cents question today my sister what is the one historical truth you know about St. John's Cathedral? The first and right reverend H. R. Holme was here in 1891. Thanks for Two Cents.

1:15 Two cents question today my sister what is the one historical truth you know about St. John's Cathedral? St. John's Cathedral was built in 1812 and the second reverend was G.A. Ormsby and I've been going to this church since about six years now I'm a regular member here and I was married here in 1971 to Anthony Tios(?). Thanks for Two Cents.

1:41 Two cents question today my brother what is the one historical truth you know about St. John's Cathedral? Well, I know it was consecrated in 1826 along with the Yarber cemetery so they go hand in hand actually...uhhh my two cents. Thanks for Two Cents.

1:55 Two cents question today my brother what is the one historical truth you know about St. John's Cathedral? What I do know is, um, they cut the cornerstone and was laid down in 1812 and construction started after that. The Cathedral was built or completed in 1826. It was built by slaves as was alluded to earlier and um after the building of the Cathedral those who built it were not able to worship in the Cathedral itself. There was a fence that surrounded the entire cathedral and when they come to church there they were outside. The Cathedral, some of the beams, you know they are original if you look the way it was shaped it is identified right there. Those are original from the time it was built in 1812. Umm the chandelier when the church was consecrated and that plaque says you know about its consecration. Who came and everything and when it was consecrated in 1826. Umm when it was consecrated there were three chandeliers.

One of the two were badly damaged in the 1931 hurricane and one was left over there. Previously it was lamp accuracy and later on converted to electricity. Thanks for Two Cents sir.

4:08 Two cents question today my sister what is the one historical truth you know about St. John's Cathedral? The cornerstone was laid in 1812. Thanks for Two Cents.

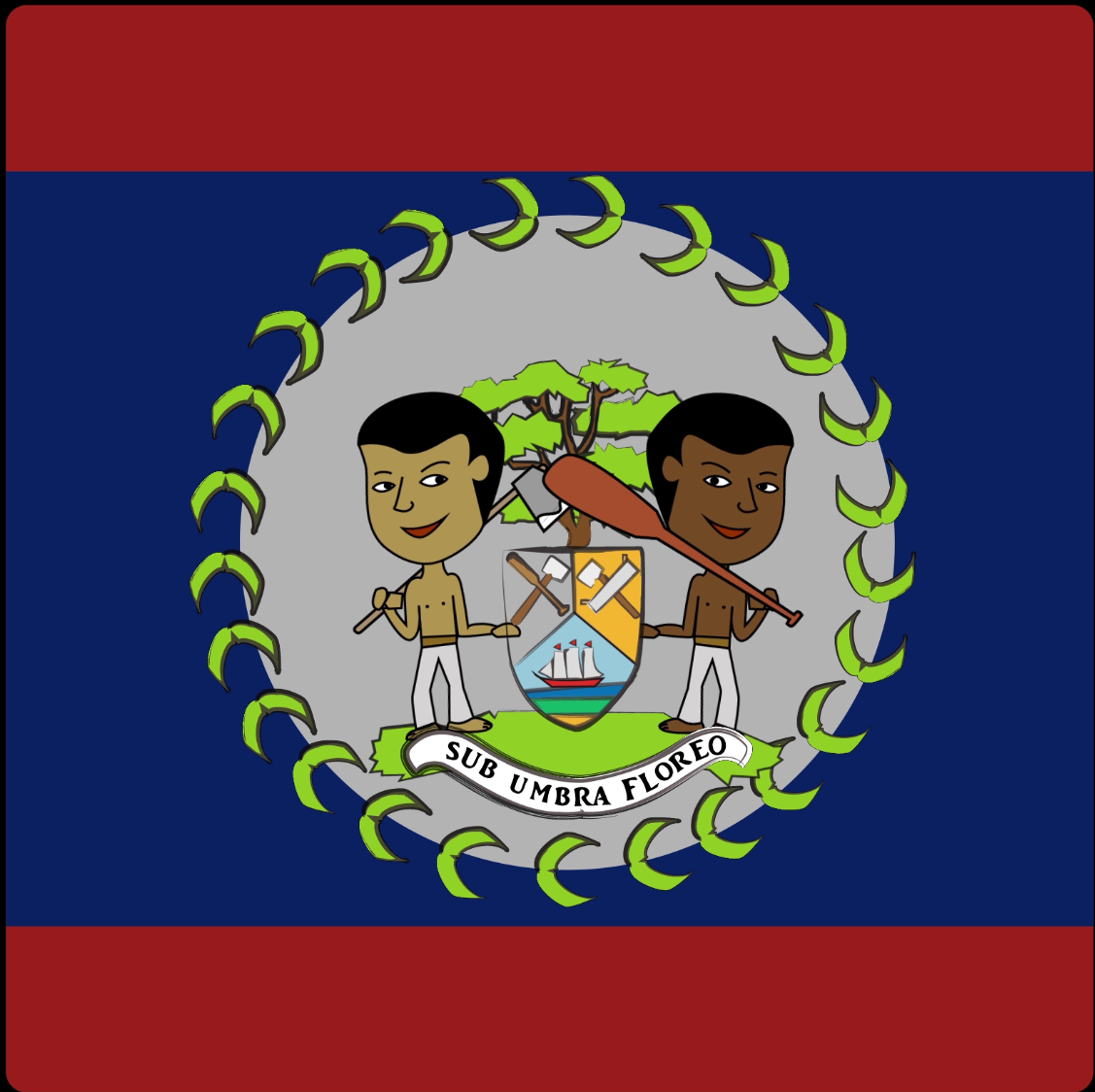
4:18 Two cents question today my sister what is the one historical truth you know about St. John's Cathedral? St. John's Cathedral is the oldest church, Episcopal church in Central America. The corner stone was laid in 1812. And so it is one of the historical monuments of the country and its one of the tourist destinations spots as we speak so we try to promote it as much as we can. You know there were the coronations of kings there as well so it has a real, wide history and it goes all the way back you know so. And the original building is still there. The benches the pews are still there you know so it really has a lot of history to it. And it is a destination spot for tourists at this point. We do have a lot of tourists who goes in there. Thereby once the cruise ships go in they go in there you know to walk to and just to be a part of that history.

5:09 [on screen text] "2 Cents Cam Oral History"

END

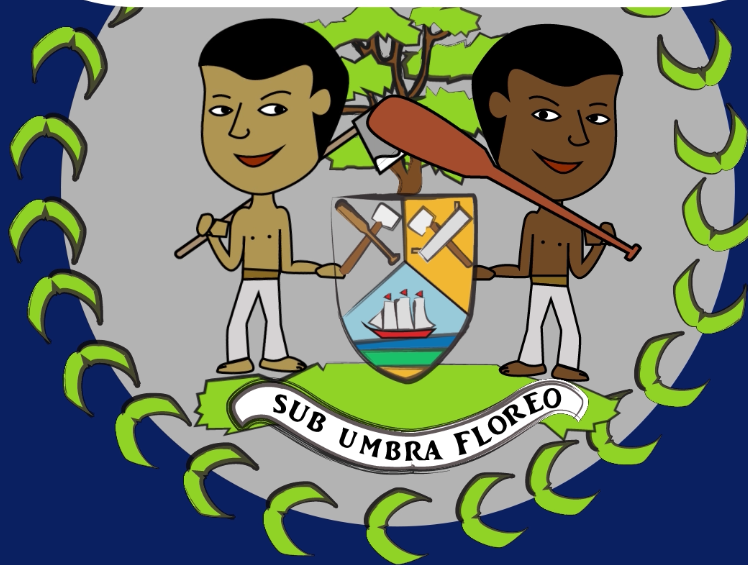


BELIZE CITY TOUR



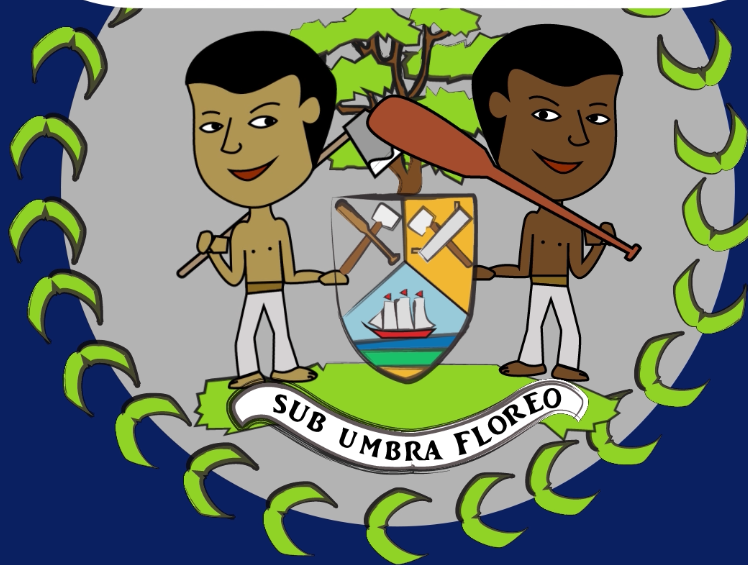
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Welcome to
Belize City



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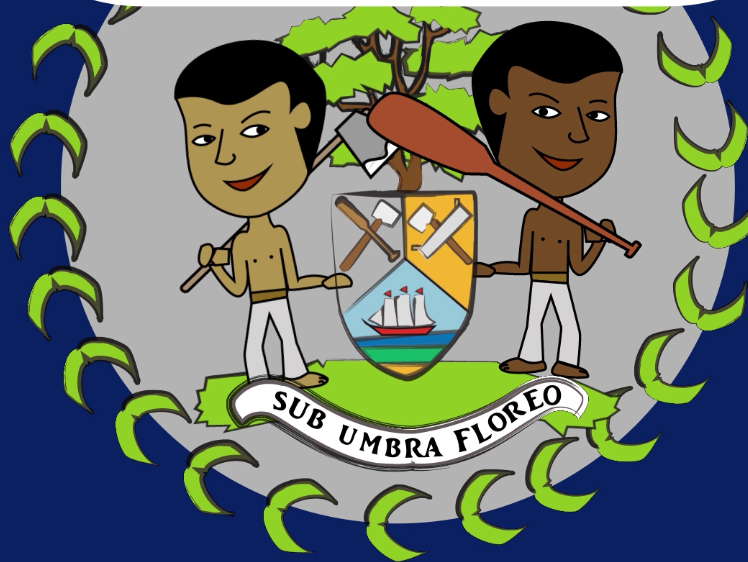
How's your first
impression to
this hub of the
country?



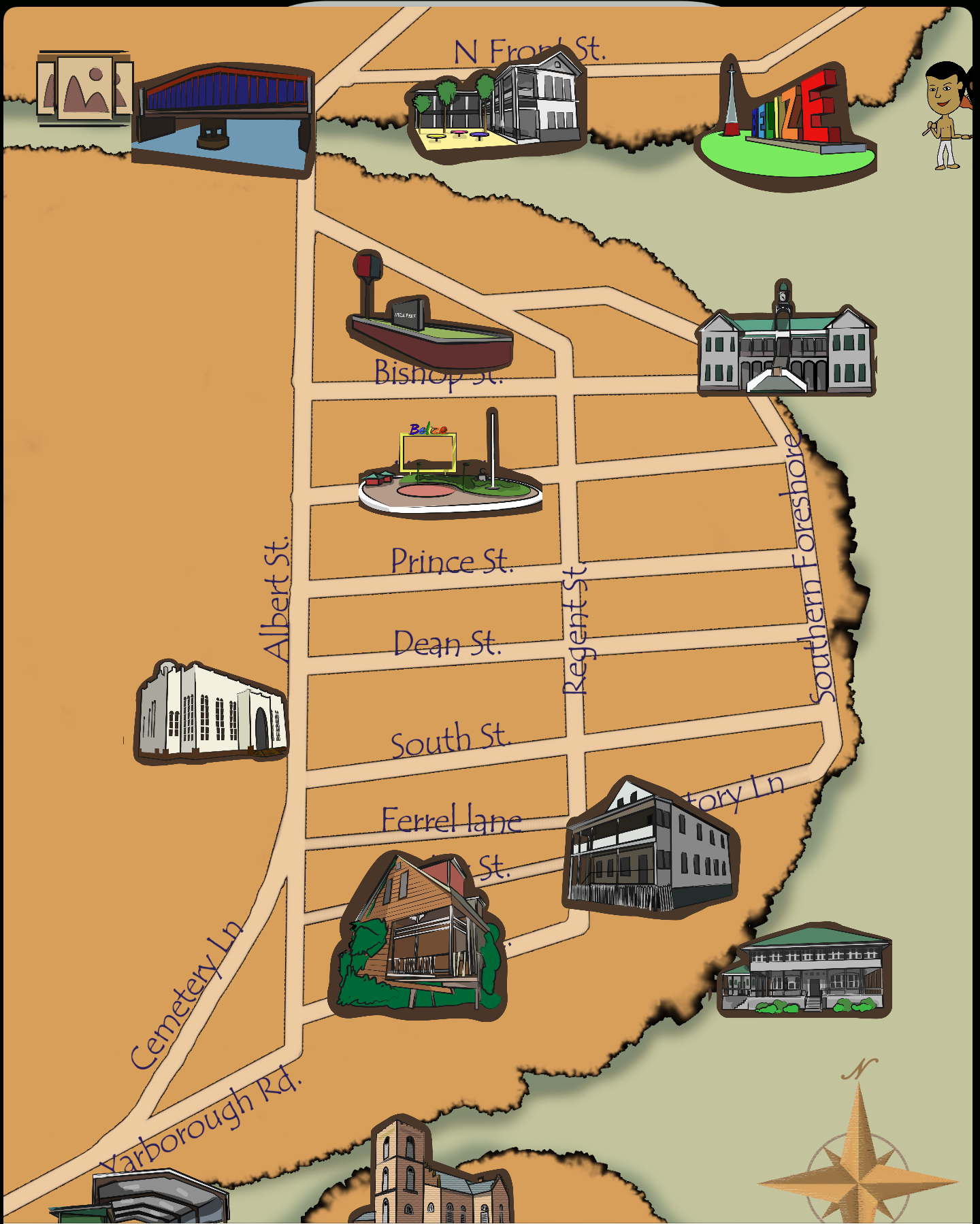
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If you haven't got a
chance to visit the city,
please follow our
guidance to explore the
historic Downtown –

Belize City!



skip >>



Map



Project



About us

SKIP

Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project

Belize City was the capital of Belize during the English colonial era. Strolling through its downtown area, you would come across some colonial-style old houses here and there. The city is like a treasure trove of Belizean history and culture that has long been forgotten. As a result, the Government of Belize has been working in collaboration with the Taiwan ICDF since 2014 on developing the Downtown of Belize City into a rich eco-museum, composed of a selection of historical buildings such as the famous Government House and St. John's Cathedral.



Map



Project



About us

Skip

Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project

We believe that by means of preserving and revitalizing the colonial-style public architecture and private houses, creating cultural amenities for community participation, and enhancing the tourist-friendly atmosphere, the old city can be most effectively transformed. We welcome you to join our journey and set out on a walking tour around. You'll definitely be fascinated by the abundance of cultural heritage embedded in the city!

[Click here to watch the introduction video!](#)



Map



Project



About us

Skip

If you haven't got a chance to visit the city, please follow our historic Downtown –

A vision of an eco-museum

← In contrast to a conventional museum which emphasizes collecting objects and displaying them in one building, an eco-museum leaves objects in their current context. It could encompass a series of display nodes, architecture and landscapes which form a network where the local community members could work with museum specialists to present their history. →



Map



Project



About us

SKIP

If you haven't got a chance to visit the city, please follow our

A vision of an eco-museum

Therefore, an eco-museum could physically consist of a core and its satellites. The core museum possesses the unique contents which render the overall story of the city, while the satellites, according to their individual characteristics, are displayed with thematic subjects, cultural artifacts and people's memories. In the case of Belize City, the former Government House, currently under renovation, will be repositioned as the core museum, connected by several rejuvenated satellites scattered within the Downtown of Belize City, forming an eco-museum that welcomes the visitors to discover the rich



Map



Project



About us



財團法人國際合作發展基金會
International Cooperation and
Development Fund

The TaiwanICDF is dedicated to boosting socio-economic development, enhancing human resources and promoting economic relations in developing partner countries. We also offer humanitarian assistance and provide aid in the event of natural disasters or international refugee crises.



Map



Project



About us

To carry out our mission, we offer a range of assistance that centers on four core operations: lending and investment, technical cooperation, humanitarian assistance, and international education and training. Our Fund is used to make direct or indirect investments and to finance lending operations. Revenues generated by the Fund are used to support our bilateral or multilateral technical cooperation projects, humanitarian assistance operations and education and training.



Map

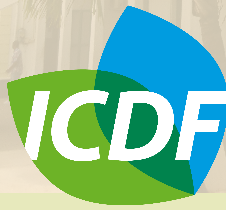


Project



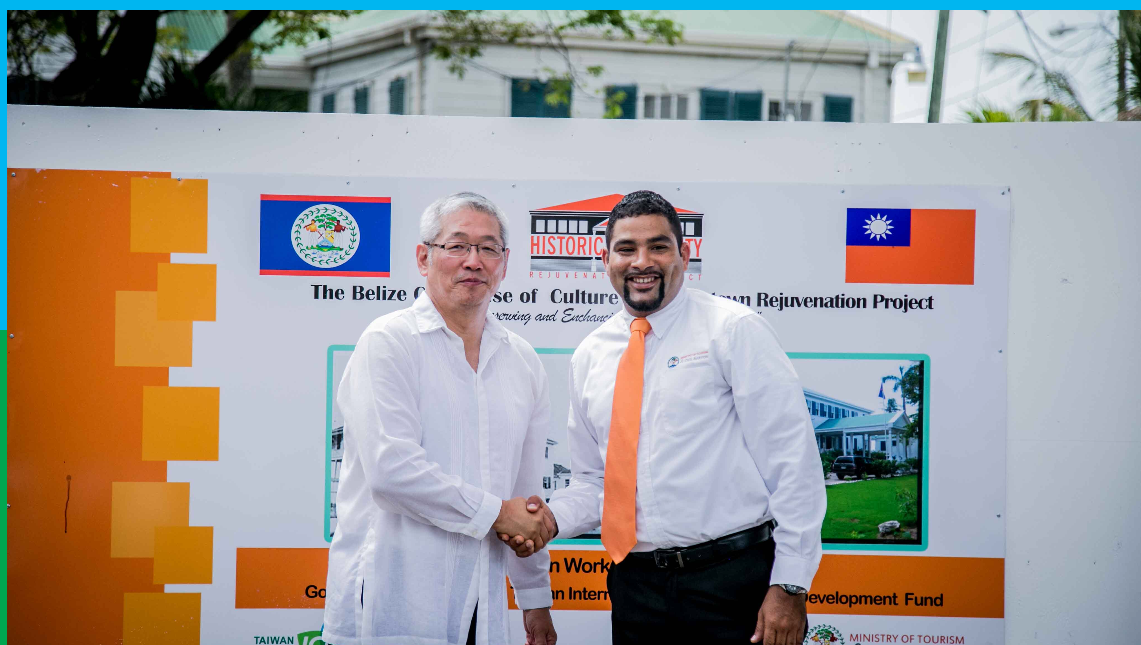
About us

TAIWAN



財團法人國際合作發展基金會
International Cooperation and
Development Fund

Our projects are designed to address the strategic development goals of each of our partner countries, pay due consideration to associated regional trends, and maximize results by employing the right combination of capital and technical cooperation. Our work is tailor-made to the local needs of each partner country, covering a variety of contemporary development issues such as environment, public health, agriculture, education, and information and communications technology.



Map



Project



About us

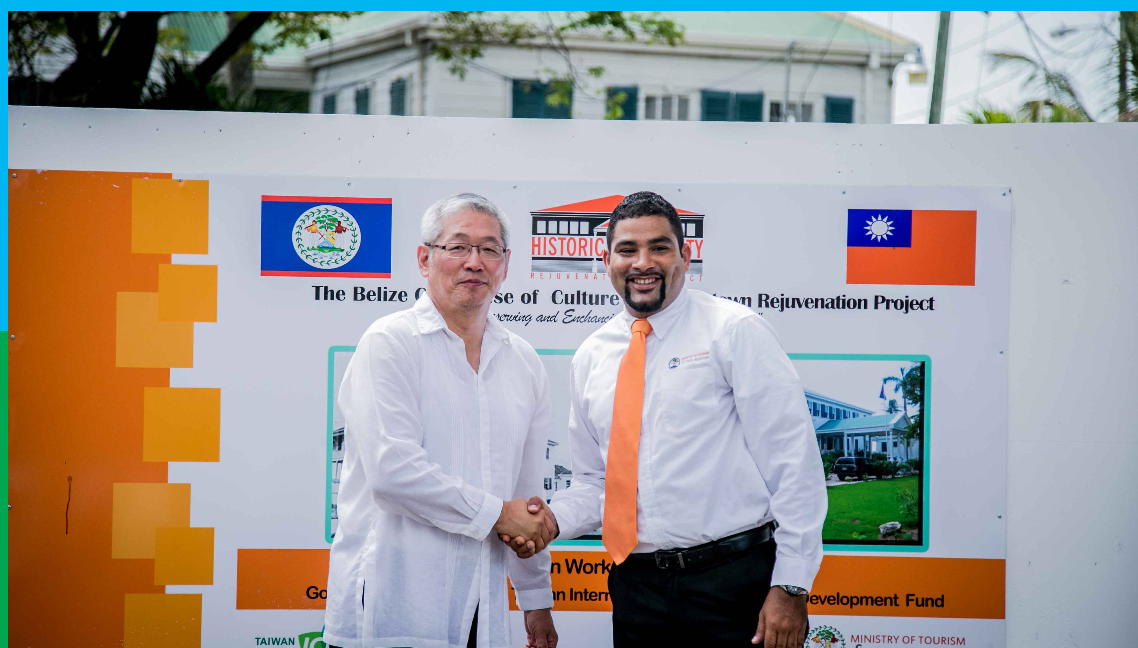
contemporary development issues such as environment, public health, agriculture, and communications technology

TAIWAN



財團法人國際合作發展基金會

International Cooperation and Development Fund



The Belize City Tour app has its origins in the Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project, jointly implemented by the TaiwanICDF and the Government of Belize since 2014. The project aims to promote awareness and appreciation of colonial heritage and cultural identity through the rejuvenation of a pilot selection of historical/colonial buildings, creating an eco-museum that will contribute to the development of sustainable cultural tourism.



Map



Project



About us



Map



Project



About us

SKIP



St. John's Cathedral

Story

Information



Built in 1812, St John's Cathedral is the oldest surviving building of Belize's colonial period as well as the oldest Anglican Church in Central America.



St. John's Cathedral

Story

Information



Built in 1812, St John's Cathedral is the oldest surviving building of Belize's colonial period as well as the oldest Anglican Church in Central America.

The church was built by slaves from bricks brought to Belize as ballast in the hulls of ships sailing from Europe. It took 8 years to complete the construction. You can find inside many original architectural touches including intricate stained glass windows, ornate mahogany pews and an antique organ.



In 2018, St. John's Cathedral underwent restoration through a project implemented in collaboration between the TaiwanICDF and the Ministry of Tourism in Belize, which aims to



St. John's Cathedral

Story



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In 2018, St. John's Cathedral underwent restoration through a project implemented in collaboration between the TaiwanICDF and the Ministry of Tourism in Belize, which aims to create an eco-museum within Downtown Belize City.



St. John's Cathedral

Story

Information

 **Time**

Daily (6:00am-6:00pm)

 **Type**

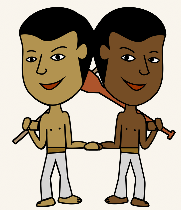
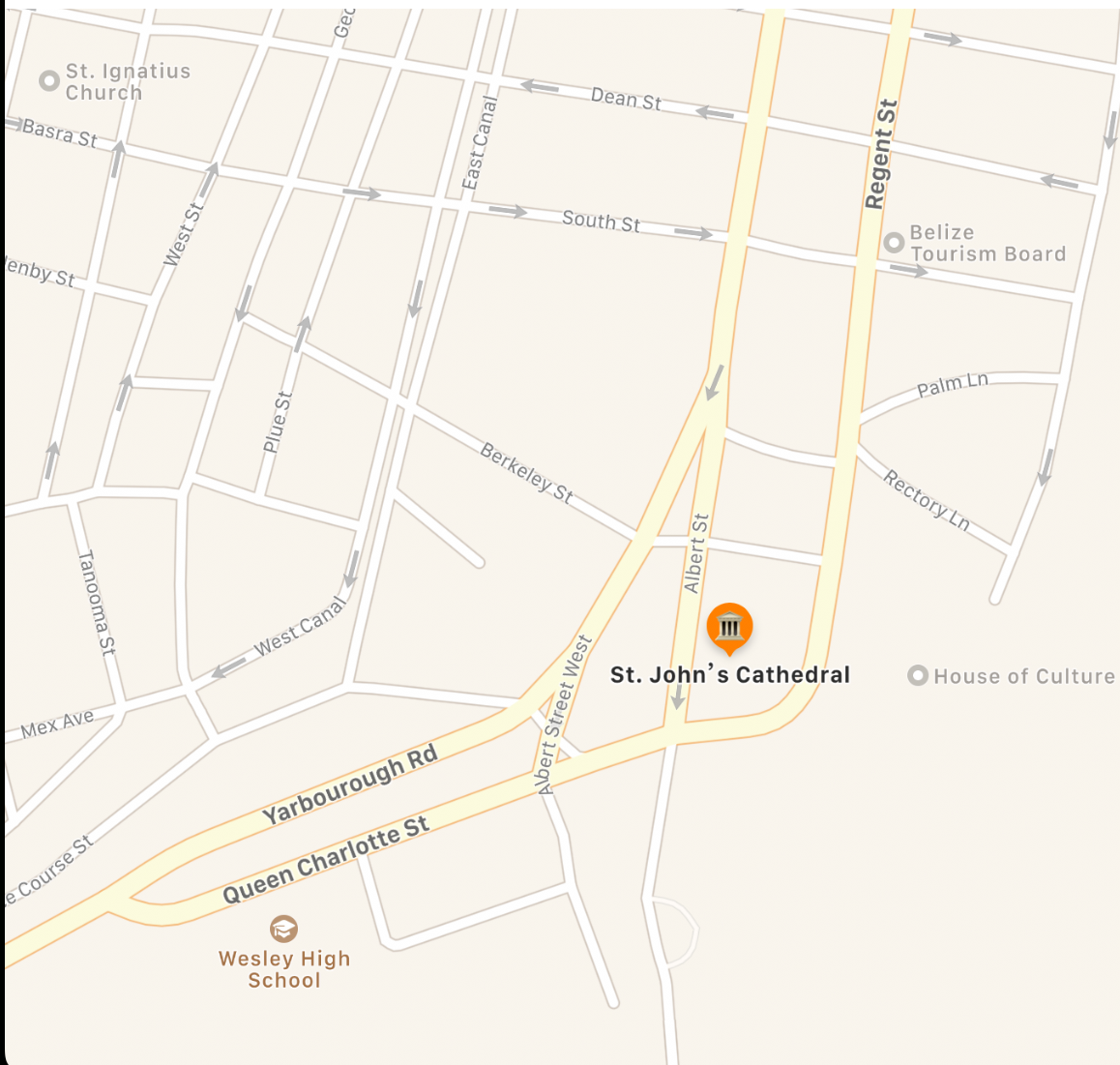
monument

 **Location**

73 Regent St, Belize City, belize

 **Phone**

+501 227-3050







VISIT SITES

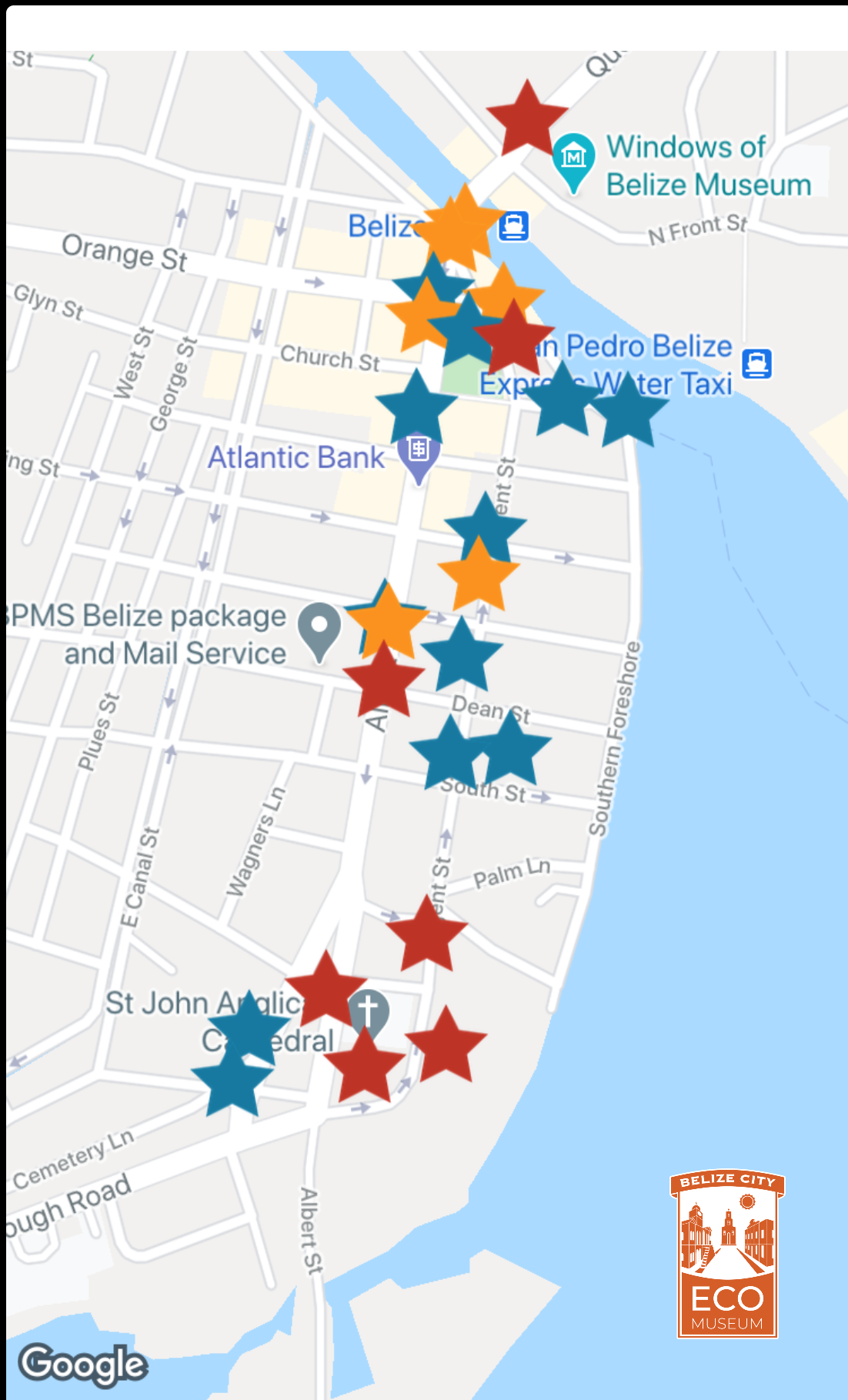
VIEW THE TUTORIAL

ABOUT THE ECOMUSEUM

ABOUT THE TAIWAN ICDF

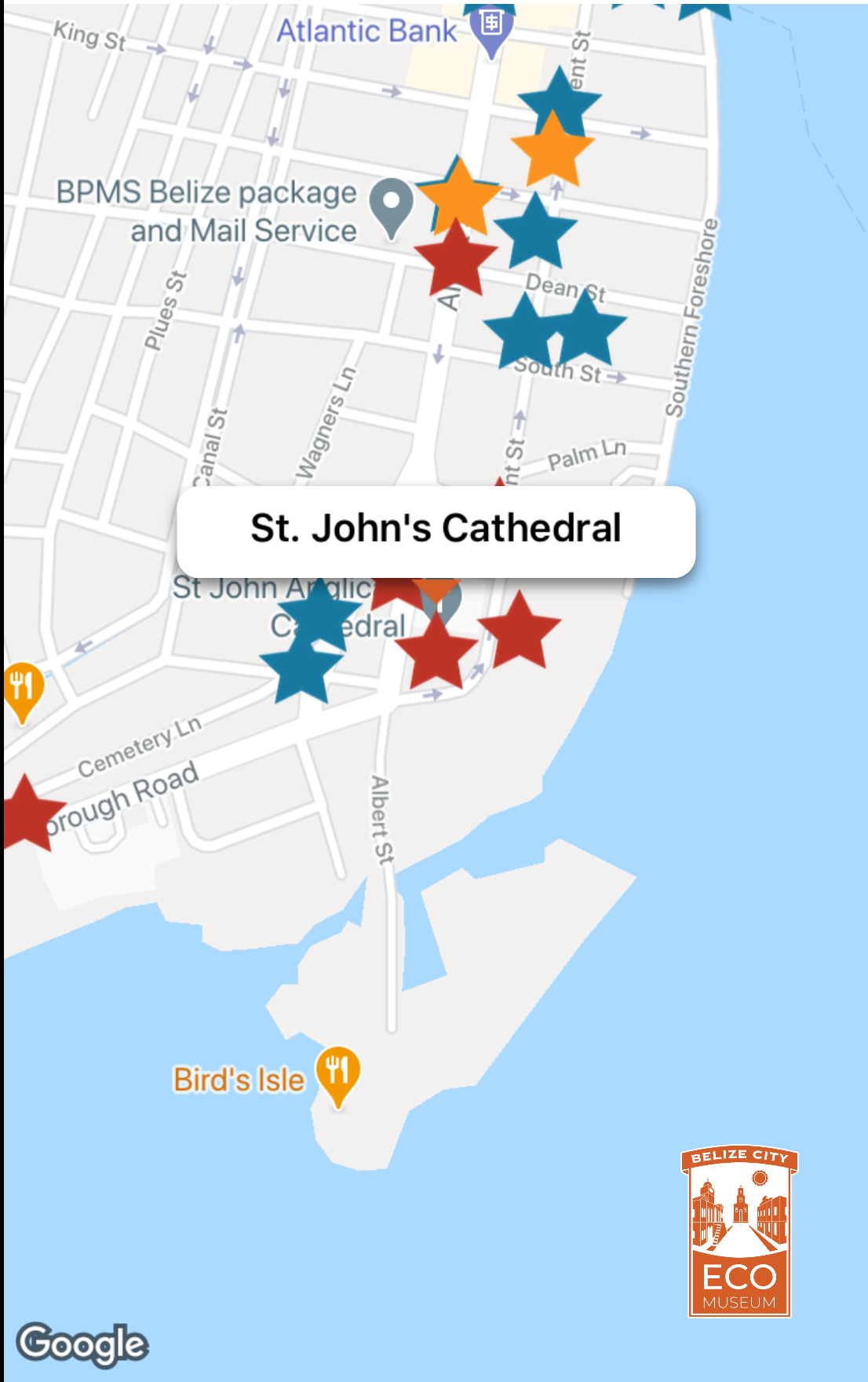
VISIT WEBSITE





Google





[← MAIN MAP](#)

[NEXT →](#)

1 Belize Heritag...

2 Government...

3 Human Devel...

4 Ronald Frede...



STORY

MAP/INFO





DETAILS



St. John's Cathedral

Story

Information



- Built in 1812
- Consecrated in 1826
- Oldest Historic Building Belize
- Site for the Crowning of three Mosquito Kings





DETAILS



St. John's Cathedral

Story

Information

HOW TO REACH LOCATION



You can't fail to be excited by the amazing historical attractions found in Downtown, Belize City. With so much to see and learn; it's hard to narrow down the long list of symbolic events, sights and attractions that have come to life since the origination of Belize City in the early 1600's.

In an effort to invest in the improvement of the core competencies of Downtown, Belize City (its activity, historic value, cultural heritage and community), and to encourage socio-economic integration, the Government of Belize and the Taiwan International Development Fund (ICDF) have launched "The Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project (BCHCDRP)". The project utilizes an Eco-Museum Development Concept and is valued at BZD \$15.1million. The project is currently being executed by the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation in conjunction with the National Institute of Culture and History and the Belize City Council.





ABOUT THE ECO MUSEUM

In an effort to invest in the improvement of the core competencies of Downtown Belize City (its business activities, historic value, cultural heritage and community) and to encourage socio-economic integration, the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation and Taiwan ICDF, under the Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project, a project funded by Taiwan ICDF and the Government of Belize, collaborated to create the Downtown Belize City Walking Tour Mobile Application. The goal of the App is to provide a visitor to downtown the opportunity to take an interactive self-guided walking tour of our newly established Ecomuseum. Please enjoy the App!

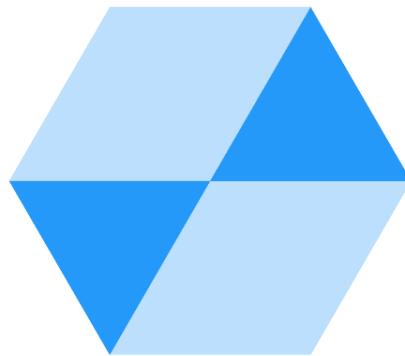




ABOUT THE TAWIAN ICDF

economic development, enhancing human resources and promoting economic relations in developing partner countries. We also offer humanitarian assistance and provide aid in the event of natural disasters or international refugee Crises. To carry out our mission, we offer a range of assistance that centers on four core operations: lending and investment, technical cooperation, humanitarian assistance, and international education and training. Our Fund is used to make direct or indirect investments and to finance lending operations. Revenues generated by the Fund are used to support our bilateral or multilateral technical cooperation projects, humanitarian assistance operations and Our projects are designed to address the strategic development goals of each of our partner countries, pay due consideration to associated regional trends, and maximize results by employing the right combination of capital and technical cooperation. Our work is tailor-made to the local needs of each partner country, covering a variety of contemporary development Issues such as environment, public health, agriculture, education, and information and communications technology. The Belize City Tour app has its origins in the Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project, jointly implemented by the Taiwan ICDF and the Government of Belize since 2014. The project aims to promote awareness and appreciation of colonial heritage and cultural identity through the rejuvenation of a pilot selection of historical Rejuvenation Project, jointly Implemented by the Talwan ICDF and the Government of Belize since 2014. The project aims to promote awareness and appreciation of colonial heritage and cultural identity through the rejuvenation of a pilot selection of historical/ colonial buildings, creating an eco-museum that will contribute to the development of sustainable cultural tourism.





Information for the App - Instructions here:

Thank you for downloading our Ecomuseum interactive Downtown Belize City Walking Tour Mobile Application. The key feature of the App is that the utilizer will be able to locate themselves in relation to the various historic sites in real time; however, the location feature will require continuous internet access to be enabled. The other features of the App will be available without internet access.

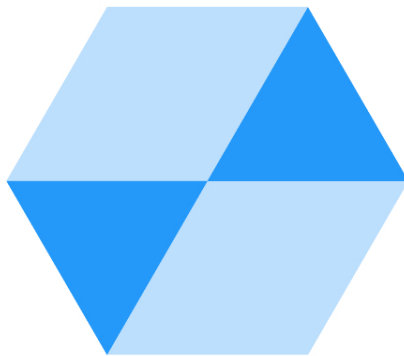
Please enjoy our App and have a nice day!

SKIP



NEXT





About the Project

Belize City, located at the Belize River estuary, is the largest city in Belize. It used to be the capital city of Belize and also the hub of economic, political, and cultural development. However, due to severe hurricanes, the Government of Belize decided to move the capital to Belmopan in 1970. Following the removal of the administration function, the downtown area of Belize City gradually suffered from economic stagnation and urban depression. To rejuvenate Downtown Belize City the project will do so by means of preserving and revitalizing the colonial-style public architecture and private homes.

Downtown Belize City is thus transformed by

SKIP



NEXT

atmosphere. As such, the Government of Belize, in conjunction with the National Taiwan University



Appendix L
Transcript: *Government House, Belize Oral History*

START

0:00 [on screen text] “KREM Television in association with”

0:05 [on screen text] “The Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project”

0:12 [on screen text] “Presents Oral History”

0:20 This ‘2 Cents Cam’ segment for Old Government House now initiative of the Belize House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project. Project partners the National Institute of Culture and History, Belize City Council and the international funding agency Taiwan International Cooperation Development Fund.

0:38 Two cents question my boy, what do you hear about old Government House now the House of Culture? That in 1981 it was the House of Culture. Thanks for two cents.

0:49 Two cents question today my sister what is the one story you hear about old Government House now House of Culture? I know when I was growing up and I been way back yonder, a long time ago, in way back when I was about seven or eight when we march for 10th of September when we pass here we have to solute. Thanks for two cents.

1:14 Two cents question today my brother what is the one story you hear about old Government House now House of Culture? Well, the house was built in 1814 and between 1814 and 1981 this is where the British Governors used to be. And since 1981 now, then we had the Belizean Dame Elmira Minita Gordon and Sir Colville Young. Thanks for two cents.

1:33 Two cents question today my brother, do you have any memories of Government House now House of Culture? All I can remember when I was young is that Belizeans were forbidden from going into the Government House before it was opened. Thanks for two cents.

1:48 Two cents question today my sister you have any memories of old Government House now House of Culture? Yeah the Government House, underneath they have these shackles, um, all the way in the bottom I remember because I was, I was, short enough, I would walk under and I would see these shackles that were umm attached to the cement and someone once told me that that’s sometimes where they put the slaves, I don’t know if that’s true but I remember that. Thanks for two cents.

(where did they go???)

2:18 Two cents’ questions here brother you have any memories of old Government House now House of Culture? I was a little boy right going to school. We used to march every 10th of September and I remember a story that my grandmother told me, right, that she used to be a maid at the Government House, the House of Culture now. And, she give me a story that one morning

we had a storm and she was supposed to reach at work at about six in the morning. Well, the storm created a flood of sorts and she was late. Like, five or ten minutes late that morning for work. And the supervisor called her in and tell her that “you were late” and she said “I know but we had a storm.” He said well, you know the penalty of being late you can either get punishment by suspension or go to jail. So, my grandmother got real upset about that because she was a very efficient worker. She makes sure that she is at work on time and everything set on time. And I say “grandmother who said that?” and she said “the supervisor” so I said how could the supervisor tell you this? I was about five, six years old when I was questioning her about this because of the fact that when we used to march September I used to be stubborn marching in the gate because we used to walk Albert Street to Regent Street and the governor stood on his veranda and we walked through the first gate and have eyes looking at him and we pass through the other gate the exit gate. So, I said grandma, you tell me this now, I said, that make I feel funny because they shouldn’t treat you like this so my grandma say you know something we have to listen to our employers. So, I say who is obviously say, you better listen to the governor whatever he says we all have to do. She said let me tell you something. She say, now they used to put slaves downstairs in the government house (5:21) who do not do what they needed to do. I say well no, this really riled me up, I say grandma, why they do that she said let me tell you something, we are slaves. I didn’t know what that word mean at that time I said grandma what do you mean slaves, slaves to who? She say, to the governor. I say oh, that is why they wanted to put you in jail? She said yes, you have to obey the superior. Anyway, I say grandma, I don’t know if I could do that. From that day when she told me that story when I march on the 10th of September, the entrance gate, I march past, and I get my glass(?) at the exit gate. Do you know what they did to me? They put me on the bench to stand up with no refreshment. And from that day something in my stomach, you know, when you mention slave, I fell some kind of feeling come with me that sometimes I have to resist anything that I feel like connected to that. So that’s my story about the House of Culture, the Government House, which is the House of Culture now.

7:07 [on screen text] “2 Cents Cam Oral History”

END

Appendix M

Transcript: *Reconstruction and Upgrade of Belize City House of Culture Compound*

START

0:00 [on screen logo of Historic Belize City Rejuvenation Project]

0:06 Aerial shot of House of Culture compound

0:14 [on screen text] “Reconstruction & Upgrade for House of Culture Compound”

0:19 [on screen text] “Made Possible by the Belize City House of Culture and Downtown Rejuvenation Project”

0:28 [on screen logos of Taiwan ICDF and Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation appear in the lower right of the screen]

0:33 [on screen text] New House of Culture

0:38 [on screen text] Baron Bliss Sea King

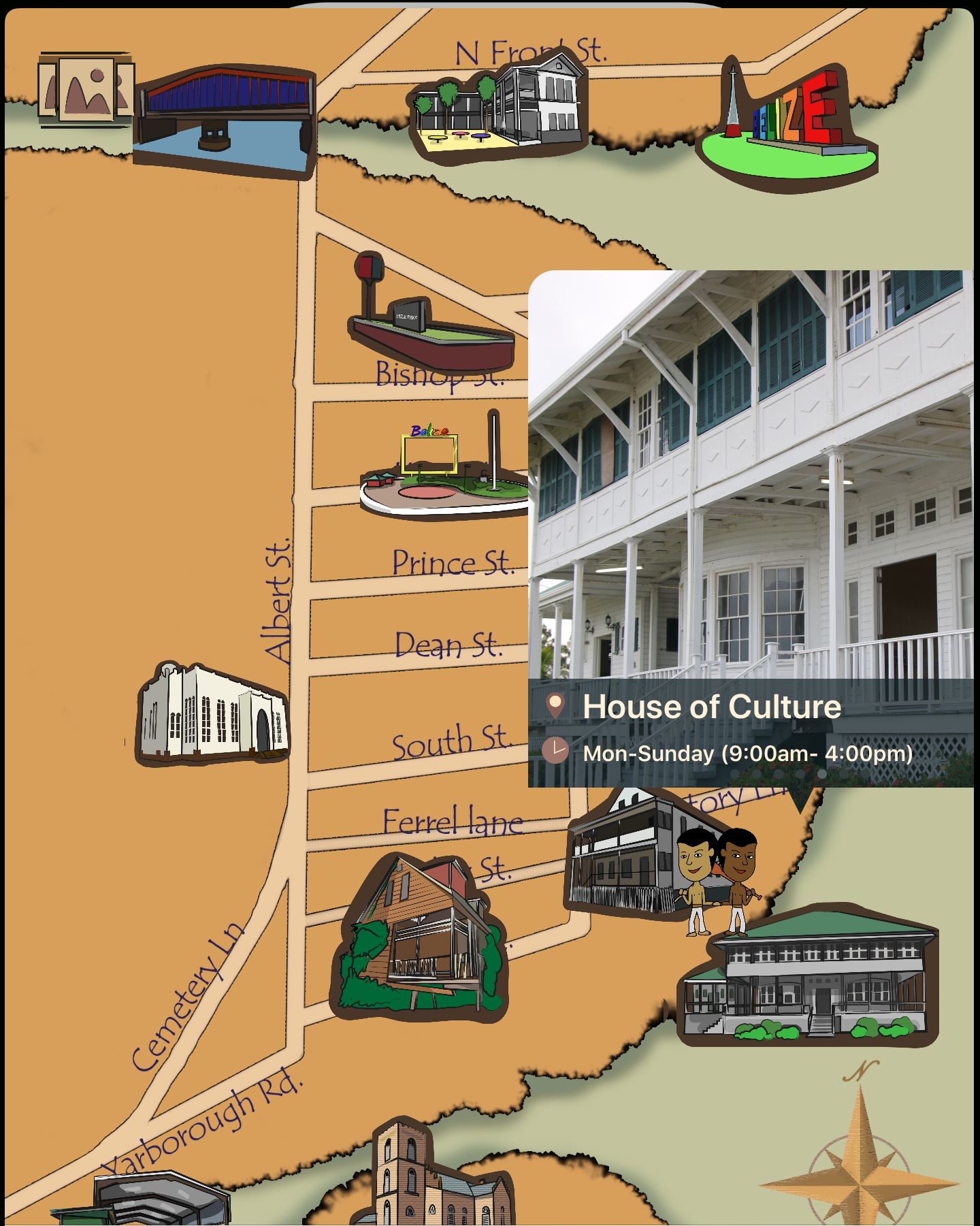
0:46 [on screen text] Rebuilt Carriage House

1:07 [on screen text] Renovated Stage

1:21 [on screen text] Renovated Government House

1:49 [on screen text] Reconstruction & Upgrade for House of Culture

END



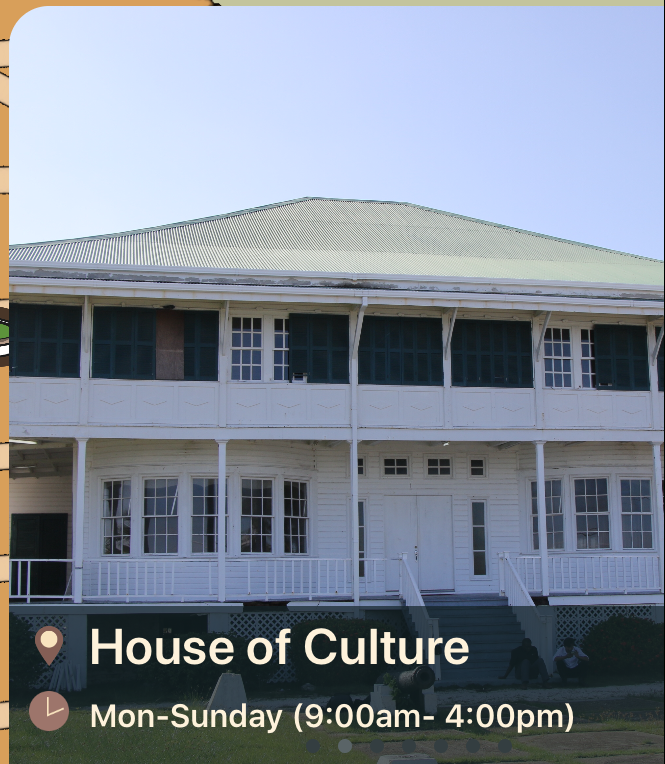
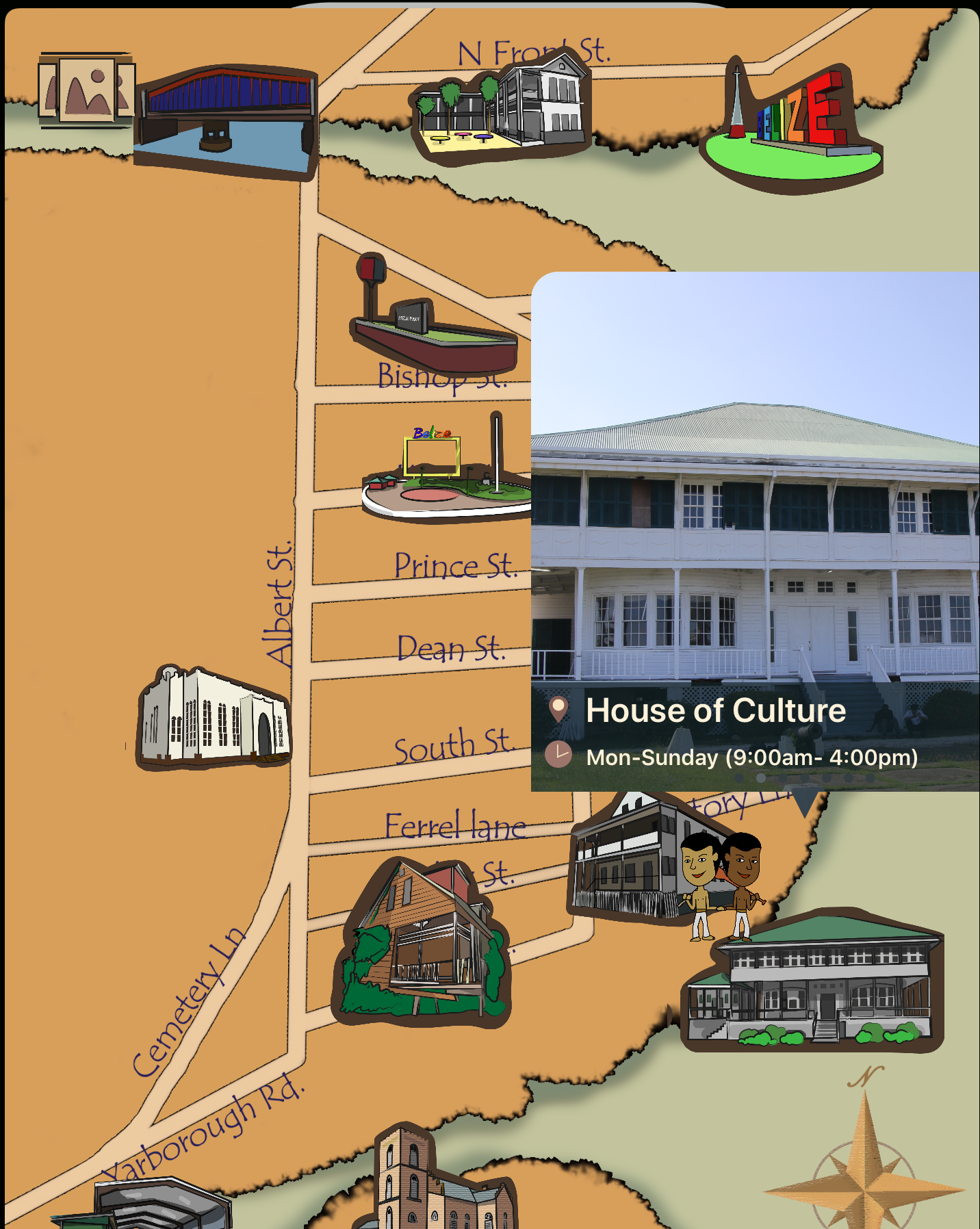
Map



Project



About us



House of Culture
Mon-Sunday (9:00am- 4:00pm)



Map

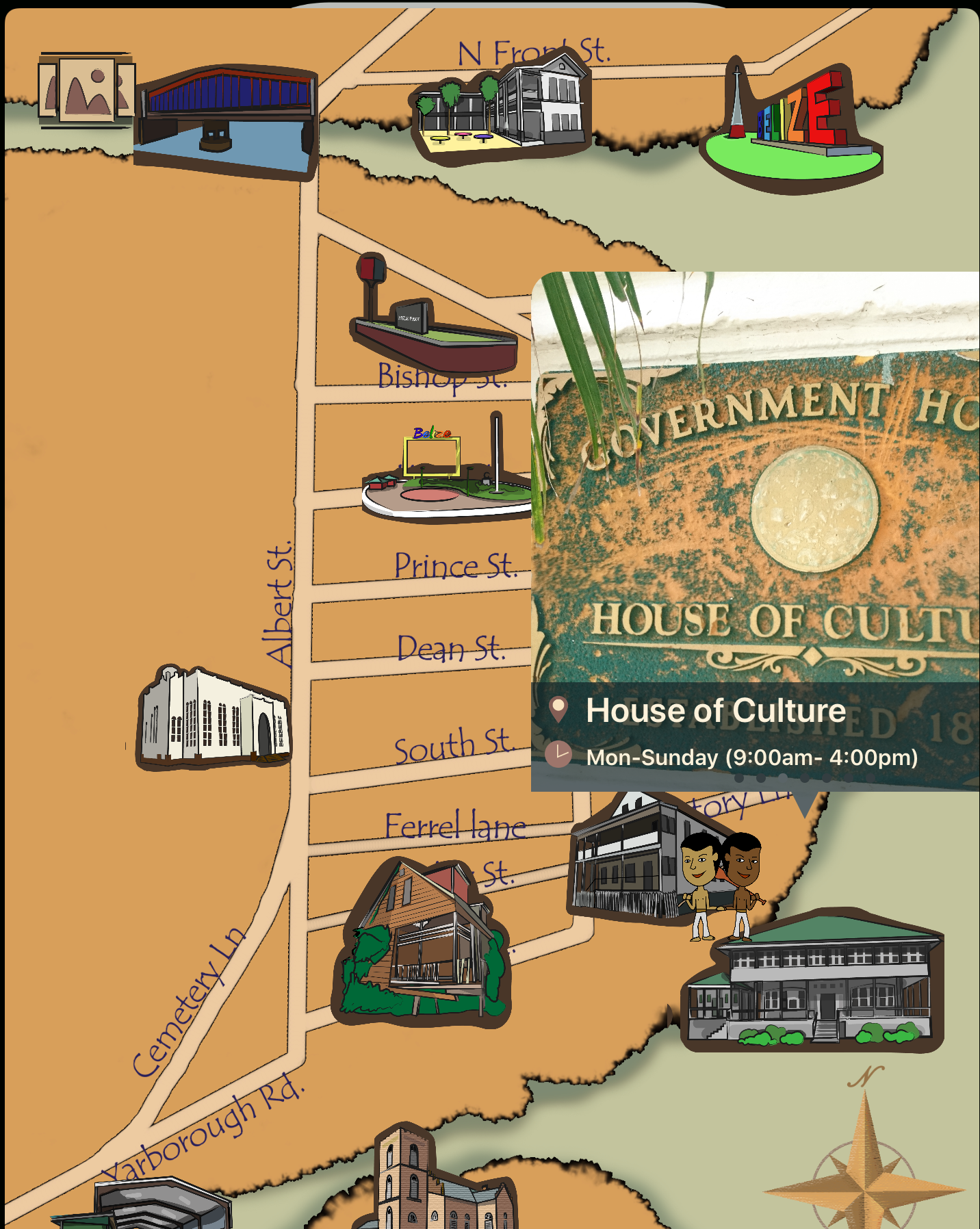


Project



About us

SKIP



House of Culture

Mon-Sunday (9:00am- 4:00pm)



Map

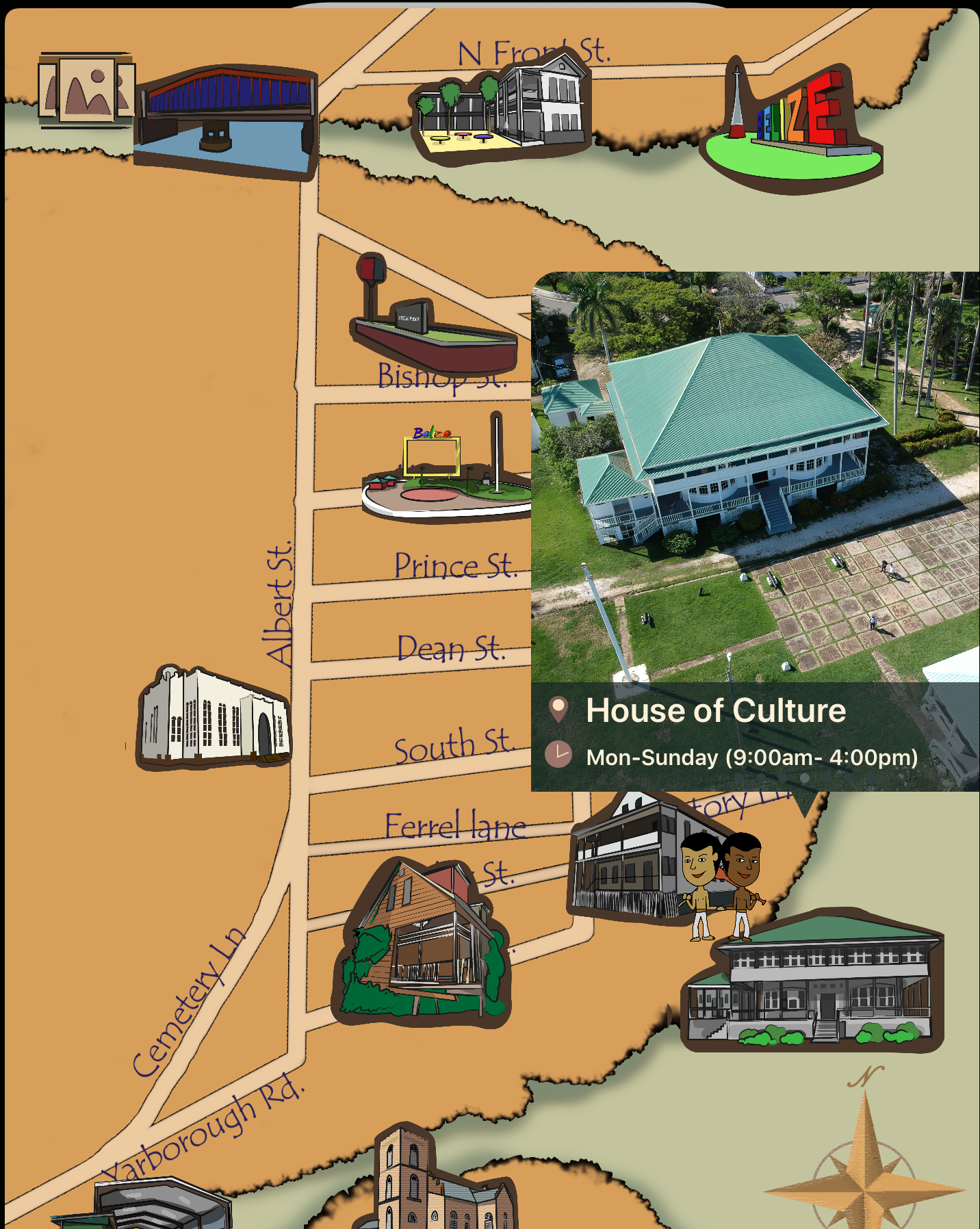


Project



About us

SKIP



Map

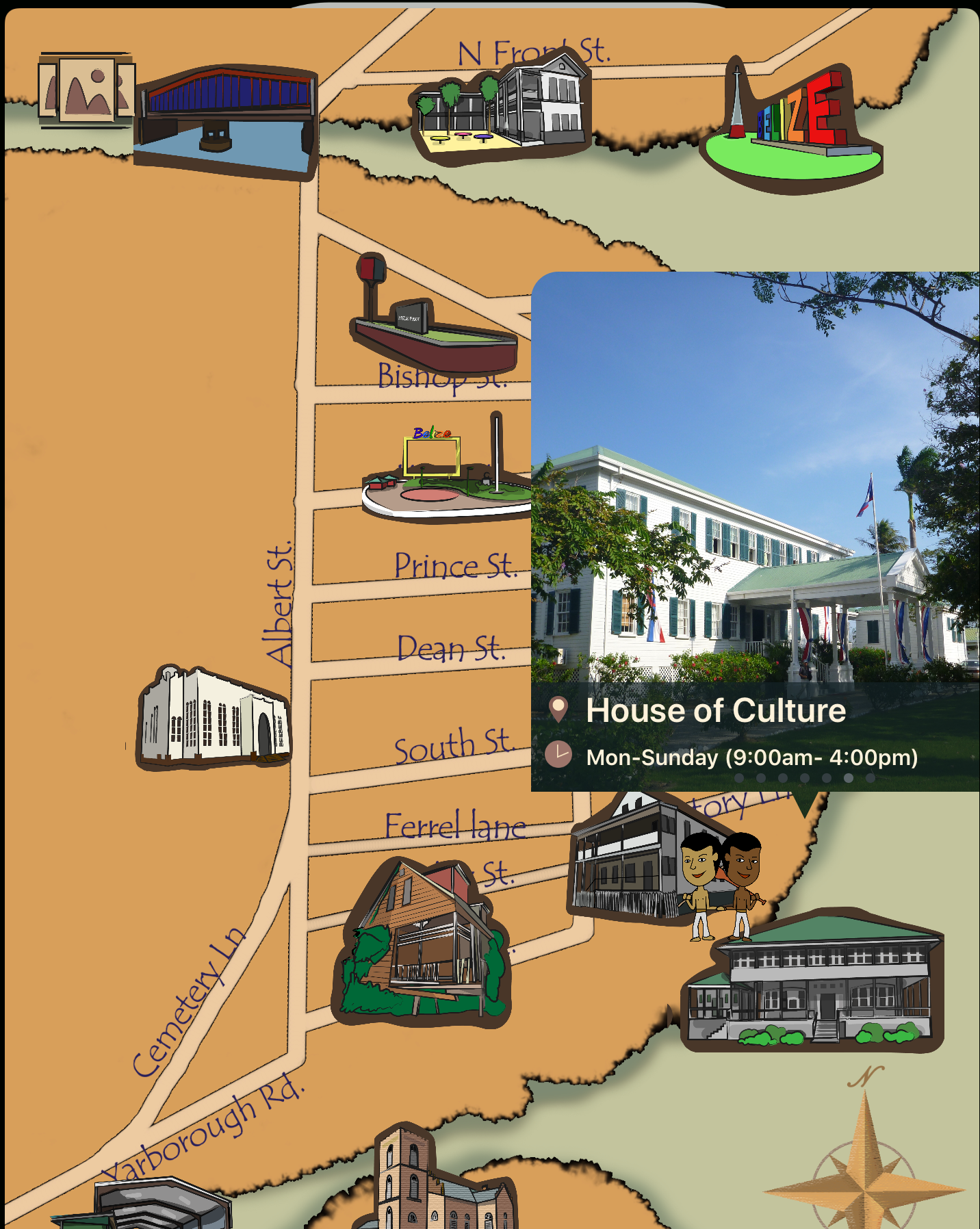


Project



About us

skip



📍 **House of Culture**
🕒 Mon-Sunday (9:00am- 4:00pm)



Map

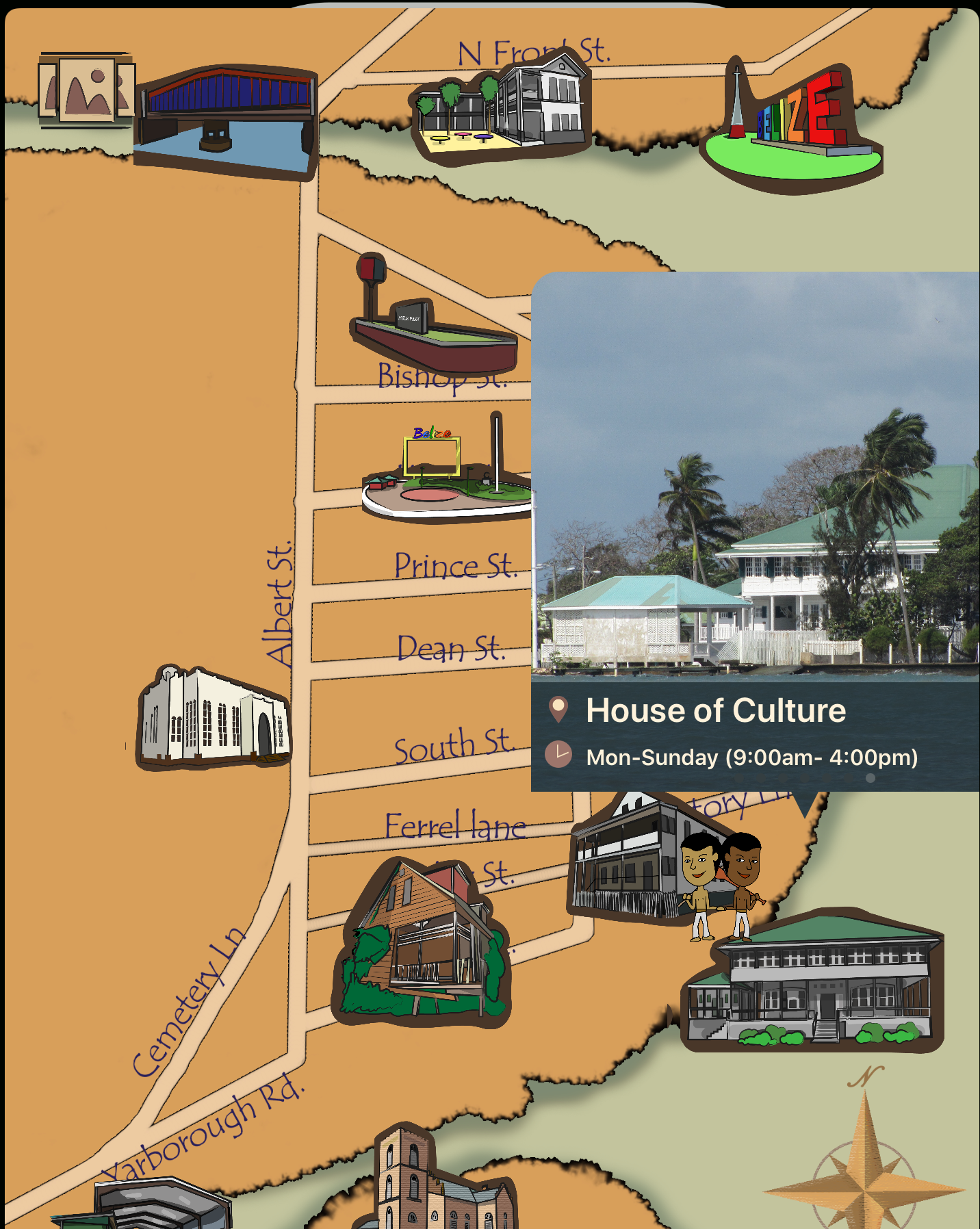


Project



About us

Skip



House of Culture

Mon-Sunday (9:00am- 4:00pm)



Map

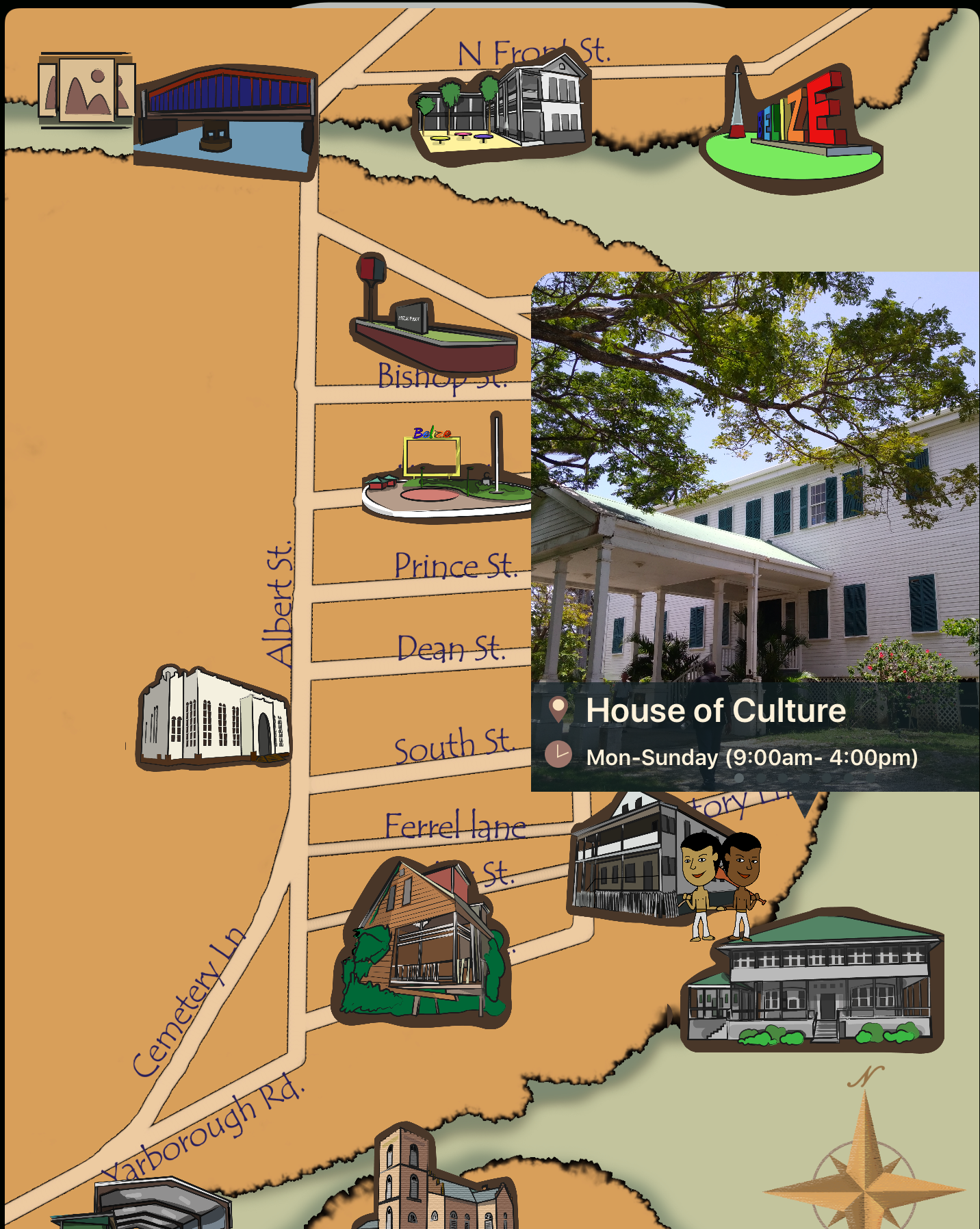


Project



About us

SKIP



Map



Project



About us

SKIP



House of Culture

Story

Information



Built in 1814 for Colonel George Arthur, this Government House had been home to 38 colonial governors of British Honduras between 1814 and 1981.



House of Culture

Story

Information



Built in 1814 for Colonel George Arthur, this Government House had been home to 38 colonial governors of British Honduras between 1814 and 1981.

Due to its historic significance, the Government House was converted into the House of Culture in 1998, exhibiting the history and local culture of Belize City.



It will be under restoration through a project implemented in collaboration between the TaiwanICDF and the Ministry of Tourism in Belize, which aims to create an eco-museum within Downtown Belize City.



House of Culture

Story

Information



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Due to its historic significance, the Government House was converted into the House of Culture in 1998, exhibiting the history and local culture of Belize City.



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House of Culture

Story

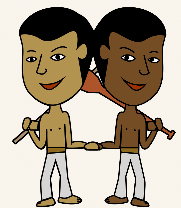
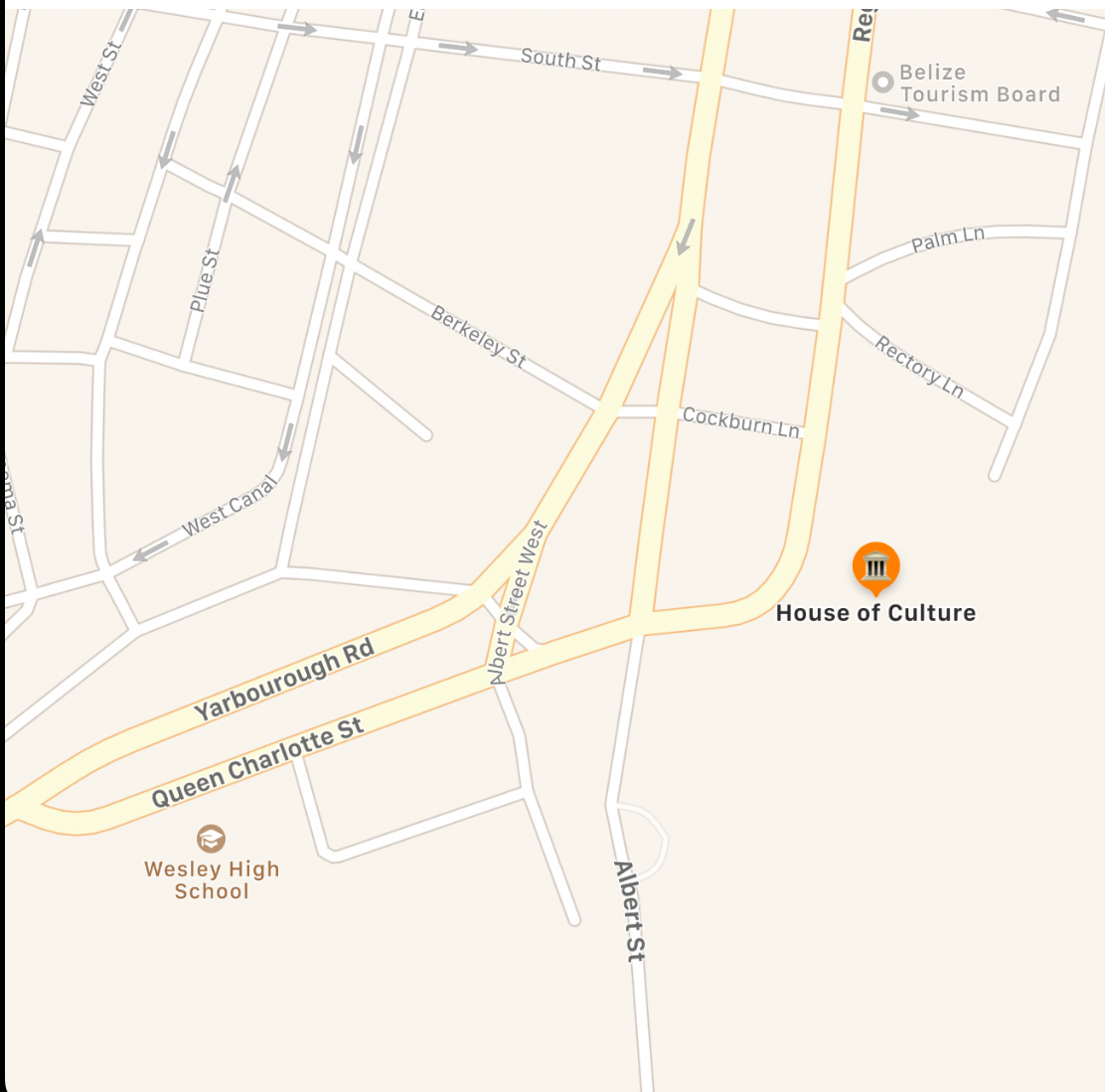
Information

 **Time** Mon-Sunday (9:00am- 4:00pm)

 **Type** museum

 **Location** Regent St, Belize City, belize

 **Phone** +501 227-3050





Government House Pro...



Google

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Government House Property

[1 Belize Heritag...](#)[2 Government...](#)[3 Human Devel...](#)[4 Ronald Frede...](#)[STORY](#)[MAP/INFO](#)



DETAILS



Government House Property

Story

Information



- Built in 1814 for Colonel George Arthur.
It is said that the building was built





DETAILS



Government House Property

Story

Information



- Built in 1814 for Colonel George Arthur.
 - It is said that the building was built using plans developed by the illustrious British architect Sir Christopher Wren.
 - Was home to 38 Colonial Governors 1814 to 1981.
 - Converted to the House of Culture in 1998.





DETAILS



Government House Property

Story

Information

HOW TO REACH LOCATION

